CHAPTER-V
Policies and Interventions
International Framework:

- In the Middle age children were considered as “small adults”

- In the middle of 19th century, the idea of giving children special attention appeared in France.

- In 1841, laws started to protect children at their workplace.

- In 1881, French laws included the right for the children to be educated.

- At the beginning of the 20th century, children’s protection started to be put in place, including protection in the medical, social and judicial fields. This kind of protection started first in France and spread across Europe later on.

- In 1919, the international community, following the creation of The League of Nations (later to become the UN), started to give some kind of importance to that concept and formed a Committee for Child Protection.

- The League of Nations adopted the Declaration of the Rights of the Child on September 16, 1924, which is the first international treaty concerning children’s rights. In five chapters it gives specific rights to the children and responsibilities to the adults.

- World War II and its casualties left thousands of children in dire straits. Consequently, the UN Fund for Urgency for the Children was created in 1947, which became UNICEF and was granted the status of a permanent international organization in 1953. From its inception, UNICEF has been focusing particularly on helping young victims of WW2, taking care mainly of European children. But in 1953, its mandate was enlarged to a truly international scope and its actions expanded to developing countries. UNICEF then put in place several
programs for helping children in their education, health, and their access to water and food.

- On December 10, 1948, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights recognized that “motherhood and childhood are entitled to special care and assistance.”

- In 1959 the General Assembly of the UN adopted the Declaration of the Rights of the Child. Whereas this document had not been signed by all the countries and its principles had only an indicative value, it paved the way to a Universal Declaration of Children Rights.

- In the midst of the Cold War and after hard negotiations, Universal Declaration of Human Rights was adopted by the General Assembly of the UN in New York:

- The year 1979 was declared as International Year of the Child by the UN. That year saw a real change of spirit, as Poland made the proposal to create a working group within the Human Rights Commission, which was in charge of writing an international charter.

- The Convention on the Rights of the Child was adopted unanimously by the UN General Assembly on November 20, 1989. Its 54 articles describe the economic, social and cultural rights of the children.

- The International Charter for Economical, Social and Cultural Rights recognized the right to protection against economical exploitation, the right to be educated and the right to healthcare.

- The Charter related to Civil Rights established the right to have a name and a nationality.

- The Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention was adopted on June 17, 1999.

- In May 2000, the optional protocol to the International Charter of the Child Rights regarding the participation of children in armed conflicts
was ratified. It came into force in 2002. This document prohibited minors taking part in armed conflicts. As of today, the International Charter of the Child Rights has been signed by 190 countries, even though there are a few reservations concerning certain parts of the document. Only the US and Somalia have signed but not ratified.


**Pre-Independence Era**

The early part of the 19th century saw no substantial body of the law relating to the liabilities, treatment of welfare of children. Under the common law principle of equality before the law, everyone was liable to ordinary proceedings in the ordinary courts and hence no special provisions were made for the children (Barooah, 1992).

The common law principle needed radical changes in the light of the social conditions following the industrial revolution. There was an increase in the young offender and children going wayward who needed to be dealt with institutions distinct and separate from ordinary courts.

In India the Apprentice Act was passed in 1850 to provide better treatment to the children between the age of 10 to 18 years. Then Reformatory School Act, 1876 came and it was amended in 1897 that made provisions for special courts which could order 3-7 years detention and training instead of punishment (Barooah, 1992).

The first move to enact a Children’s Act came from the Indian Jails Committee (1919-1920) which recommended special treatment for young offenders to reform and rehabilitate them. The Children’s Act in various states in the 20s was a sequel to the committee’s recommendations.

The Children’s Act of Madras came into force in 1920, then in Bengal in 1922, followed by Bombay in 1924. The trend continued and state parties enacted child welfare oriented laws with little variations. The state parties recognised the importance of understanding the situation of a child. Very
few laws relating to children were enacted before independence in the country which were as following:

**The Guardian and Wards Act, 1890**

In the ancient period, the property of the minor was protected by the State. Before the Act, the laws on this subject were not uniform and were passed mostly by the Bombay, Madras and Bengal presidencies. The act mainly deals with the appointment of the Guardians (Guardian of Minor and Guardian of Property) for both the purposes, and secondly their rights, duties and liabilities.

**Child Marriage Restraint Act, 1929**

Child Marriage Restraint Act 1929, passed on 28 September 1929 in the British India Legislature of India, fixed the age of marriage for girls at 14 years and boys at 18 years which was later amended to 18 for girls and 21 for boys. It is popularly known as the Sarda Act, after its sponsor Harbilas Sarda. (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Child_Marriage_Restraint_Act)

**The Children (Pledging of labour) Act 1933 (Amended by Act No 3 of 1951 and A.O. 1950)**

Under this Act any person employing or making agreement with parents or organizations for child labour will be punished. Parents or guardians who give a pledge or make an agreement for children's services in return for payment or any benefit in return are liable for a fine of Rs. 50. The employer who makes the agreement with parents or guardians for child labour will be fined Rs. 200.

**The employment of Children Act, 1938**

It prohibits the employment of children less than 15 years in occupation connected with transport passenger, goods or mail by Railways; or connected with the Postal authority. The children below 14 years cannot be employed for Cement Manufacture including packing, Mica cutting, and splitting, soap and shellac manufacturing, wool cleaning, manufacturing of
matches, explosives and fireworks, tanning, workshops connected with carpets, weaving and cloth printing, and dyeing.

**Post Independence Era**

**Constitution of India**

The Indian constitution accords rights to children as citizens of the country, and in keeping with their special status, the State has even enacted special laws. The Constitution, promulgated in 1950, encompasses most rights included in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child as Fundamental Rights and Directive Principles of State Policy. Over the years, many individuals and public interest groups have approached the apex court for restitution of fundamental rights, including child rights. The Directive Principles of State Policy articulate social and economic rights that have been declared to be “fundamental in the governance of the country and … the duty of the state to apply … in making laws” (Article 37). The government has the flexibility to undertake appropriate legislative and administrative measures to ensure children’s rights; no court can make the government ensure them, as these are essentially directives. These directives have enabled the judiciary to give some landmark judgements promoting children’s rights, leading to Constitutional Amendments as is in the case of the 86th Amendment to the Constitution that made Right to Education a fundamental right.

**Fundamental rights**

**Article 14** : ..... shall not deny to any person equality before the law or the equal protection of the laws within the territory of India.

**Article 15** : ..... shall not discriminate against any citizen …(3) Nothing in this article shall prevent the state from making special provisions for women & children . (4) Nothing …. shall prevent the state from making special provision for the advancement of any socially and educationally backward classes of citizens or for the scheduled castes and scheduled tribes.
Article 17: ..... Untouchability is abolished and its practice in any form is forbidden.

Article 19: ..... all citizens shall have the right – (a) to freedom of speech and expression....(c) to form associations or unions. (d) to move freely throughout the territory of India.(e) to reside and settle in any part of the territory of India.

Article 21:..... No person shall be deprived of his life or personal liberty except according to procedure established by law.

Article 21 A:..... states that that state shall provide free and compulsory education to all children of the age of six to fourteen years...

Article 23: traffic in human beings and beggar and other similar forms of forced labour are prohibited.

Article 24:.....No child below the age of fourteen years shall be employed to work in any factory or mine or engaged in any other hazardous employment.

The Minimum Wages Act, 1948

The act defines child “as a person who has not completed his/her fourteen years of age and Adolescent as a person who has completed 14 years but has not completed 18 years of age. As per the Minimum Wages Act, 1948 the number of hours of work for the adolescent shall be fixed by the medical practitioner as approved by the Government, which shall be decided on consideration of adolescent as an adult or the child. The child should, however, not be allowed to work for more than 4-1/2 hours on any day and the act permits the children above 12 years of age for a maximum 6 hours in a day.

The Factory's Act, 1948

The Act prohibits the employment of children up to the age of 14 years. The Act prohibits the employment of child or an adolescent (those between ages 15-18) unless he/she is certified by an authorised surgeon as to his/her
physical fitness for work. The fitness certificate is valid for an year only. Moreover children are not allowed to work for more than 4-1/2 hours on any day.

**Directive Principle of State Policy**

Article 39:... (e) ...the tender age of children are not abused ...and not forced by economic necessity to enter avocations unsuited to their age or strength ; (f) that children are given opportunities and facilities to develop in a healthy manner and in conditions of freedom and dignity and that childhood...protected against exploitation and gainst moral and material abandonment.

Article 45:...provide early childhood care and education for all children until they complete the age of six years.

Article 46: shall promote with special care the educational and economic interests of the weaker sections of the people, and, in particular, of the scheduled castes and the scheduled tribes ....

Article 47: ...raising of the level of nutrition and standard of living of its people and the improvement of public health

Article 51: the state shall endevor to - ....(c) foster respect for intetnational law and treaty obligations

Article 51 A: ....(k) ....parent or guardian to provide opportunities for education his child or as the case may be , ward between the age of six and fourteen years.

**The Plantation Act, 1951**

According to the Act the minimum age of employment is 12 years. Adolescent between ages 15-18 are employed on the same basis as proved under the Factories Act, 1948. The prescribed maximum hours are 40 hours a week.
The Mines Act, 1952 (Amended in 1983)

The Act covers all workers working in mines both underground and on surface. No person below the age of 15 is permitted to work on the surface, and a person must have completed the age of 16 years and in addition to that a fitness certificate given by an authorised surgeon is essential. Even at this age the maximum hours of work allowed are 4-1/2 hours per day. The Act was further amended in 1983 that made provisions of punishment for violation up to Rs 2000/- fine and imprisonment up to three years.

The Merchant Shipping Act, 1958 (Amended in 1984)

The Act provides that the employment of children below the age of 15 years with certain exemptions is prohibited. Also persons below 18 years cannot be employed as trimmers and stokers. The Act was further amended in 1984 that prohibited the employment of the children below 15 years at sea works and any capacity in a training ship, or a ship or in a home trade ship with less than 200 tons gross or where the child is employed at nominal wages and will be in the charge of his or other male relative. Punishment for violation is imprisonment of up to five months and a fine of Rs 50/-.

Prevention of Vagrancy and Beggary Acts

The state government has enacted anti-beggary Acts in respective states. As per the information available on the website of Press Information Bureau, Government of India, Ministry of Social Justice Empowerment, 20 states and two union territories have anti-beggary laws in the country. The Madras Prevention of Begging Act, 1959 is the oldest and first Anti-begging Act in India. The Act defines a child as a boy who has not completed 16 years of age and a girl who has not completed 18 years of age. According to this Act, beggars found guilty by a court of law were sentenced to a minimum of one year and a maximum of three years in Beggar’s Home (certified Homes).
The Children Act, 1960 (Amended in 1978)

The Government of India enacted the Children’s Act, 1960 on 26 December 1960 in the 11th year of Republic India. The Act was to provide for the care, protection, maintenance, welfare, training, education and rehabilitation of neglected, delinquent children. The Children’s Act, 1960 was amended in 1978 in the 29th year of Republic India to make it more effective and meet the requirements of delinquent and neglected children, allowed flexibility in the use of institutions for the neglect and delinquent children and made available. The arrangements made for after care services, when the children leave the Children Homes and Special Homes for their reintegration and rehabilitation.

Motor Transport Workers Act, 1961

The Act prohibits the employment of children below 15 years of age in any capacity in the motor transport undertakings. Employment of those children who are in the age bracket 15 to 18 is regulated on the same lines as provided under Factories Act, 1948. The maximum hours of work prescribed are six hours.

The Apprentice Act, 1961

The Act prescribes that the children under the age of 14 years would be given training unless he has such standards of education or physical fitness as may be prescribed.

Beedi and Cigar Workers-Conditions of Employment Act, 1966

The minimum age for the employment of children is 14 years for any work in any industrial premises.

Radiation Protection Rules, 1971 framed under Atomic Energy Act, 1972

Children below the age of 18 years are prohibited, except in circumstances when they are permitted by a competent authority to work at places where mean radiation source are utilised.
Bonded Labour System (Abolition) Act, 1976

The Act banishes all kinds of bondage in the country.

The Shops and Establishment Acts, (State Acts)

The Act prohibits children under twelve in all states (exception Andhra Pradesh where the minimum age is 14 years) to work in shops and commercial establishments in various states, specially between 7 PM and 6 AM, and the maximum hours of work during the day varies form 5-7 hours.

The Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act, 1986

The employment of Children’s Act, 1938 was replaced by the Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act, 1986 which was passed by the Parliament on December 23, 1986. The child labour Act bans the employment of children below 14 years of age in specified occupations and processes which are recognised unsafe harmful to the child workers and regulates the conditions of work for children in employment where they are not prohibited from working. It also lays down the penalties for the employment of children in violation of the provisions of this Act, and other Acts which forbid the employment of children.

The Juvenile Justice (Care & Protection of Children) Act, 2000

The Act was passed taking into consideration all the international standards prescribed as per the Convention on the Rights of Child, the standards minimum rules for the administration of Juvenile Justice, 1985 (Beijing Rules), The UN Guidelines for the prevention of Juvenile Delinquency called the Riyadh Guidelines, 1990 and the United Nation Rules for the Protection of Juveniles Deprived of their Liberty (1990). This Act repealed the Juvenile Justice Act, 1986. The Act defines a child who has not attained the age of 18 years. The Act is called social and reformatory Act that deals with two categories of children:
1. The children in need of care and protection

2. The children in conflict with law

The Act comprehensively deals with child protection issues from state to village level and ensure the participation of children, community, stakeholders, various government departments, NGOs, family etc. The Act makes provisions for Institutional care and Non-Institutional care. The Act is based on the principal of “The best interest of the Child” and child friendly approach in Juvenile Justice System. Other than this the Act establishes, statutory bodies, service delivery structures and child protection mechanism for care and protection, treatment, restoration, rehabilitation and reintegration of the children stated in the Act.

The Commission for Protection of Child Rights Act, 2005

The above Act of the parliament received the assent of the President on 20th January, 2006. An Act to provide for the constitution of a National Commission and State Commissions for Protection of Child Rights and Children's Courts for providing speedy trial of offences against children or of violation of child rights and for matters connected there with or incidental thereto. Under the section of 17 & 18 of the Act, it provides for the constitution of State Commission for Protection of Child Rights with a Chairperson and six members to be appointed by Government. (Available at http://wcd.nic.in/sites/default/files/TheGazetteofIndia.pdf)

Prevention of Child Marriage Act, 2006

Prevention of Child Marriage Act, 2006 - The Child Marriage Restraint Act, 1929 has been repealed and the major provisions of the new Act include:

Age of marriage for boys is 21 and 18 for girls and any marriage of persons below this age is child marriage - illegal, an offence and punishable under law. Every child marriage shall be void if so desired by either the bride or the groom who was a child at the time of the marriage. Any person arranging, party to, solemnizing, participating in a child marriage is also liable to be
punished under the Act, including mass marriages. The penalty for facilitating child marriage is rigorous imprisonment up to two years and/or a fine up to one lakh rupees (Available at http://dwcdkar.gov.in/)

Right to Education Act, 2009

The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education (RTE) Act, 2009, which represents the consequential legislation envisaged under Article 21-A, means that every child has a right to full time elementary education of satisfactory and equitable quality in a formal school which satisfies certain essential norms and standards.

Article 21-A and the RTE Act came into effect on 1 April 2010. The title of the RTE Act incorporates the words ‘free and compulsory’. ‘Free education’ means that no child, other than a child who has been admitted by his or her parents to a school which is not supported by the appropriate Government, shall be liable to pay any kind of fee or charges or expenses which may prevent him or her from pursuing and completing elementary education. ‘Compulsory education’ casts an obligation on the appropriate Government and local authorities to provide and ensure admission, attendance and completion of elementary education by all children in the 6-14 age groups. With this, India has moved forward to a rights based framework that casts a legal obligation on the Central and State Governments to implement this fundamental child right as enshrined in the Article 21A of the Constitution, in accordance with the provisions of the RTE Act. (http://mhrd.gov.in/rte)

Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act (POCSO), 2012

India is the home to the largest child population in the world, with almost 42 per cent of the total population under eighteen years of age. Needless to say, the health and security of the country’s children is integral to any vision for its progress and development.

One of the issues marring this vision for the country’s future generations is the evil of child sexual abuse. Statistics released by the National Crime Records Bureau reveal that there has been a steady increase in sexual
crimes against children. According to a study conducted by the Ministry of Women and Child Development (MWCD) in 2007, over half of the children surveyed reported having faced some form of sexual abuse, with their suffering exacerbated by the lack of specific legislation to provide remedies for these crimes. While rape is considered a serious offence under the Indian Penal Code, the law was deficient in recognising and punishing other sexual offences, such as sexual harassment, stalking, and child pornography, for which prosecutors had to rely on imprecise provisions such as “outraging the modesty of a woman”. The MWCD, recognising that the problem of child sexual abuse needs to be addressed through less ambiguous and more stringent legal provisions, championed the introduction of a specific law to address this offence. The POCSO Act was therefore formulated in order to effectively address the heinous crimes of sexual abuse and sexual exploitation of children. The Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act, 2012 received the President’s assent on 19th June 2012 and was notified in the Gazette of India on 20th June, 2012. The Act is due to come into force shortly, along with the rules being framed under the Act. (http://pib.nic.in/newsite/efeatures.aspx?relid=86150)

**Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015**

The Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015 came into force on 15th January and repealed the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2000. The Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Bill, 2015 was passed by the Lok Sabha on 7th May, 2015; was passed by the Rajya Sabha on 22nd December, 2015 and received Presidential assent on 31st December, 2015.

The JJ Act, 2015 provides for strengthened provisions for both children in need of care and protection and children in conflict with law. Some of the key provisions include: change in nomenclature from ‘juvenile’ to ‘child’ or ‘child in conflict with law’, across the Act to remove the negative connotation associated with the word “juvenile”; inclusion of several new definitions such as orphaned, abandoned and surrendered children; and petty, serious and
heinous offences committed by children; clarity in powers, function and responsibilities of Juvenile Justice Board (JJB) and Child Welfare Committee (CWC); clear timelines for inquiry by Juvenile Justice Board (JJB); special provisions for heinous offences committed by children above the age of sixteen year; separate new chapter on Adoption to streamline adoption of orphan, abandoned and surrendered children; inclusion of new offences committed against children; and mandatory registration of Child Care Institutions (CCIs).

Under Section 15, special provisions have been made to tackle child offenders committing heinous offences in the age group of 16-18 years. Separate chapter (VIII) on Adoption provides for detailed provisions relating to adoption and punishments for not complying with the laid down procedures.

Several rehabilitation and social reintegration measures have been provided for children in conflict with law and those in need of care and protection. Under the institutional care, children are provided with various services including education, health, nutrition, de-addiction, treatment of diseases, vocational training, skill development, life skill education, counselling, etc to help them assume a constructive role in the society. The variety of non-institutional options include: sponsorship and foster care including group foster care for placing children in a family environment which is other than child’s biological family, which is to be selected, qualified, approved and supervised for providing care to children.

Several new offences committed against children, which are so far not adequately covered under any other law, are included in the Act. These include: sale and procurement of children for any purpose including illegal adoption, corporal punishment in child care institutions, use of child by militant groups, offences against disabled children and, kidnapping and abduction of children.

All child care institutions, whether run by State Government or by voluntary or non-governmental organisations, which are meant, either wholly or
partially for housing children, regardless of whether they receive grants from the Government, are to be mandatorily registered under the Act within 6 months from the date of commencement of the Act. Stringent penalty is provided in the law in case of non-compliance.

(http://pib.nic.in/newsite/PrintRelease.aspx?relid=134513)

**Prohibition and Regulation of Child Labour Amendment Act, 2016**

The act amends the Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act, 1986, which prohibits the employment of children younger than 14 in 83 hazardous occupations and processes. The amendment extends this ban on employment of children under 14 across all sectors, prohibits the employment of adolescents aged 14-18 years in hazardous occupations and introduces more stringent jail term and fines for offenders: a jail term of six months to two years and a fine of Rs 20,000 to Rs 50,000.

1. **Policy Initiatives**

Children constitute principle assets of any country. Children’s development is very important for the overall development of society and the best way to develop national human resources is to take care of children. India has the largest child population in the world. All out efforts are being made by the Government for the development and welfare of children. A number of policy initiatives have been taken for this purpose.

The National Policy for children lays down that the State shall provide adequate services towards children, both before and after birth and during the growing stages for their full physical, mental and social development. The measures suggested include amongst others, a comprehensive health programme, supplementary nutrition for mothers and children, free and compulsory education for all children up to the age of 14 years, promotion of physical education and recreational activities, special consideration for children of weaker sections including SCs and STs and prevention of exploitation of children, etc.
The Government of India has also adopted the National Charter for Children, which has been prepared after obtaining the views/comments and suggestions of the State governments/UT Administrations, concerned Ministries and Departments and experts in the field. The National Charter is a statement of intent embodying the Government's agenda for children. The document emphasizes Government of India’s commitment to children’s rights to survival, health and nutrition, standard of living, play and leisure, early childhood care, education, protection or the girl child, empowering adolescents, equality, life and liberty, name and nationality, freedom of expression, freedom of association and peaceful assembly, the right to a family and the right to be protected from economic exploitation and all forms of abuse. The document also provides for protection of children in difficult circumstances, children with disabilities, children from marginalized and disadvantaged communities, and child victims. The document while stipulating the duties of the State and the Community towards children also emphasizes the duties of children towards family, society and the Nation. The National Charter for Children was notified in the Gazette of India on 9th February, 2004.

India has also acceded to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child to reiterate its commitment to the cause of children. The objective of the Convention is to give every child the right to survival and development in a healthy and congenial environment.

India is also a party to the Millennium Development Goals and the SAARC Conventions on Child Welfare and Combating Trafficking of Women and Children is SAARC Region.

Ministry of Women and Child Development has prepared a National Plan of Action for Children 2005 after harmonizing the goals for children set in the UN General Assembly Special Session on Children held in 2002 and the monitorable targets set in the Tenth Five Year Plan and goals for children in related Ministries/ Departments. The Action Plan has been prepared in consultation with concerned Ministries and Departments, States/UT
Governments, non-Governmental organizations and experts. The National Plan of Action includes goals, objectives, strategies and activities for improving nutritional status of children, reducing IMR and MMR, increasing enrolment ratio and reducing dropout rates, universalisation of primary education, increasing coverage for immunization etc.

2. Child Welfare Programmes

Several Ministries and Departments of the government of India are implementing various schemes and programmes for the benefit of children. Some of the Schemes and programmes are as follows:

Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) is being implemented by MWCD is the world’s largest programme aimed at enhancing the health, nutrition and learning opportunities of infants, young children (0-6 years) and their mothers. It is the foremost symbol of India’s commitment to its children – India’s response to the challenge of providing pre-school education on one hand and breaking the vicious cycle of malnutrition, mortality and morbidity on the other. The Scheme provides an integrated approach for converging basic services through community based workers and helpers. The services are provided at a centre called the ‘Anganwadi’, which literally means a courtyard play centre, a childcare centre located within the village itself. The packages of services provided are:

1. Supplementary nutrition,
2. Immunization,
3. Health check-up
4. Referral services,
5. Pre-school non-formal education and
6. Nutrition and health education

Creche Scheme for the Children of Working Mothers

The MWCD has launched a new Creche Scheme in January 2006. The Scheme has been named as Rajiv Gandhi National Creche Scheme for the
Children of working Mothers. These creches have been allocated to the Central Social Welfare Board, Indian Council for Child Welfare and Bhartiya Adim Jati Sevak Sangh in the ration of 80:11:9. Priority has been given to uncovered districts/areas and tribal areas while extending the scheme to maintain balance regional coverage. An eligibility criterion under the Revised Scheme has also been enhanced from Rs. 1800/- to Rs. 12000/- per month per family.

**Nutrition Component of Prime Minister Gramodya Yojana and Nutrition Programme for Adolescent Girls** is being implemented in 51 districts with additional central assistance provided by the Planning commission, directly and indirectly contributing to the promoting nutrition for children. A National Nutrition Mission has also been set up with a view to enable policy direction to concerned Departments of the Government for addressing the problem of malnutrition in a mission mode.

**Reproductive and Child Health Programme (RCH)**

RCH programme is being implemented by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MHFW), the programme provides effective maternal and child health care, micronutrient interventions for vulnerable groups, reproductive health services for adolescent etc. This program covers:

- Immunization for children for DTP, Polio and Tetanus Toxoid for women
- Vitamin A administration
- Iron and folic Acid for pregnant women.

This programme integrates all family welfare and women and child health services with the explicit objective of providing beneficiaries with ‘need based, client centered, demand driven, and high quality integrated RCH services’. The strategy for the RCH programme shifts the policy emphasis from achieving demographic targets to meeting the health needs of women and children.
**Pulse Polio Immunization Programme** is being implemented by the MHFW that covers all children below five years. It is a massive programme which covers 166 million children in every round of National Immunization Day. The other immunization programmes include Hepatitis B, DPT and other routine immunization. Other notable programmes for child health include, Universal immunization programme, control of deaths due to acute respiratory infections, control of diarrhoeal diseases, provision of essential new-born care to address the issue of the neonates, prophylactic programmes for the prevention and treatment of two micronutrient deficiencies relating to Vitamin A and iron, Anemia control programme, Border District Cluster Strategy and Integrated Management of Neonatal and childhood illness.

**Mid-day Meal Scheme** is also one of the important schemes of the Government to aim at universal enrolment and retention of children. Under this programme nutritional snacks are provided to children attending schools.

**Integrated Programme for Juvenile Justice**

The programme is being implemented by the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment with a view to provide care to the children in difficult circumstances and children in conflict with the law through Government institutions and through NGOs. Some special features of the scheme are as follows:

1) Establishment of a National Advisory Board on Juvenile Justice.

2) Creation of a Juvenile Justice Fund.

3) Training, orientation and sensitization of judicial, administration, police and NGOs responsible for implementation of JJ Act.

4) Institutional care shall be used but only as a last measure by enlarging the range of suitable alternatives.

5) Financial assistance to bring about a qualitative improvement in the existing infrastructure.
6) Expansion of non-institutional services such as sponsorship, foster care, probation etc. as an alternate to institutional care.

**Child Helpline** - Child line is a 24 hour emergency phone outreach service which can be accessed by children in distress especially children in need of care and protection. It is a programme of the MWCD and Mumbai-based Child line India Foundation. The service assists to protect children by helping to rescue them from abuse and exploitative situations, direct them to shelters, medical services, counseling, and repatriation and rehabilitation services. The service can be accessed by children in difficulty or by adults on their behalf by dialing 1098. Established by the Government of India in 1999, it is presently operational in 83 cities across the country. The main objective of the service is to respond to children in emergency situations and refer them to relevant governmental and non-governmental organizations for long-term follow-up care and rehabilitation. It helps in the networking amongst government and non-government agencies in the area of child welfare and strengthening of support services such as hospitals, police, railways etc. for rehabilitation of children.

**The National Rural Health Mission**, a scheme of health Ministry seeks to provide effective healthcare to rural population including large population of children throughout the country with special focus on 18 States, which have weak public health indicators and/or raise public spending on health from 0.9% of GDP to 2-3% of GDP. It aims to undertake architectural correction of the health system to enable it to effectively handle increased allocations as promised under the National Common Minimum Programme and promote policies that strengthen public health management and service delivery in the country.

**Elimination of Child Labour** is being implemented by the Ministry of Labour which sanctions projects for rehabilitation of working children and for elimination of child labour. Under the project based Action Plan of the Policy, National Child Labour Projects (NCLPs) have been set up in different areas to rehabilitate child labour. A major activity undertaken under the
NCLP is the establishment of special schools to provide non-formal education, vocational training, supplementary nutrition etc. to children withdrawn from employment. 150 Child Labour Projects have so far been sanctioned for rehabilitating children in the most endemic areas and 1.5 lakh children have already been mainstreamed in the special schools. Financial assistance is provided under this scheme to NGOs for setting up of composite centres for working children exclusively in those areas which have not already been covered by the Ministry of Labour & Employment under their schemes, namely, National Child Labour Project and Indo-US Project. At present ministry is assisting 116 projects of 100 children each under this scheme in 14 States/UTs.

**Child Budgeting**

The Government is also actively considering introducing child budgeting. The key objectives of the endeavor would be to analyze budgetary provisions on social sector, to identify the magnitude of budgetary allocations made by the Central/State Governments on schemes meant for addressing specific needs of children, to examine the trend in child specific expenditure etc., the main agenda for the exercise of child budgeting is to review resource allocations related to children; explore ways to increase budgetary allocations for children; assess budget utilization rates for social sector and child specific programmes, identify blockages and constraints to effective utilization; identify methods for tracking expenditure and monitoring performance to ensure that outlays translate into outcomes for children.

**Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA)**

SSA is Government of India’s flagship programme for achievement of Universalization of Elementary Education (UEE) in a time bound manner, as mandated by 86th amendment to the Constitution of India making fee and compulsory Education to the Children of 6-14 years age group, a Fundamental Right. SSA is being implemented in partnership with State Governments to cover the entire country and address the needs of 192 million children in 1.1 million habitations. The programme seeks to open new
schools in those habitations which do not have schooling facilities and strengthen existing school infrastructure through provision of additional class rooms, toilets, drinking water, maintenance grant and school improvement grants. Existing schools with inadequate teacher strength are provided with additional teachers, while the capacity of existing teachers is being strengthened by extensive training, grants for developing teaching-learning materials and strengthening of the academic support structure at a cluster, block and district level. SSA seeks to provide quality elementary education including life skills. SSA has a special focus on girl's education and children with special needs.

**Scheme for the Welfare of Working Children in Need of Care and Protection**

The scheme is being implemented since January, 2005 with the objective of providing non-formal education, vocational training etc. to the working children to facilitate their entry/re-entry into mainstream education in cases where they have either not attended any learning system or where, for some reason, their education has been discontinued, with a view to prevent their future exploitation (Year review 2013, 2014).

**Integrated Child Protection Scheme (ICPS)**

MWCD is implementing this comprehensive Centrally Sponsored Scheme since 2009-10 through the State Government / UT Administrations on predefined cost sharing financial pattern. The objectives of the scheme are to contribute to the improvement in the well being of children in difficult circumstances, as well as reduction of vulnerabilities to situation and actions that leads to abuse, neglect, exploitation, abandonment and separation of children from parents. All the States/UTs have signed the MOU for implementation of ICPS.

Prior to 2009-10, Ministry of Women and Child Development was implementing a plan scheme namely, ‘An Integrated Programme for Street Children’ for the welfare and rehabilitation of street children under which
funds were released directly to NGOs. This scheme has been merged under the ICPS which is a Centrally Sponsored Scheme introduced by the Ministry in 2009-10 for implementation through State Governments and Union Territory Administrations.

ICPS provides preventive, statutory care and rehabilitation services to children who are in need of care and protection and children in conflict with law as defined under the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2000 and its amendment Act, 2006 and any other vulnerable child. It provides financial support to State Governments/UT Administrations for running services for children either themselves or through suitable NGOs. These services include (a) Homes of various types for children; (b) Emergency Outreach services through Child line; (c) Open Shelters for children in need of care and protection in Urban and Semi Urban Areas; (d) Family Based Non-Institutional Care through Sponsorship, Foster Care and Adoptions. During the current financial year, 2013-14, Ministry assisted 1210 Homes, 234 Specialised Adoption Agencies (SAAs) and 172 Open Shelters through State Governments/UT Administrations.

Financial assistance under the scheme is also provided for setting up of statutory bodies under the JJ Act namely, (a) Child Welfare Committees and Juvenile Justice Boards. As reported by State Governments/UT Administrations, 619 CWCs and 608 JJBs have so far been set up across the country. Against the allocated budget of Rs.300.00 Crore for 2013-14, an amount of Rs.129.66 Crore has been sanctioned/ released in the second quarter up to September, 2013. (Year review 2013, 2014)

The **National Commission for Protection of Child Rights** (NCPCR) is an Indian governmental commission, established by an Act of the Parliament, the Commission for Protection of Child Rights Act in December 2005. The Commission began operation an year later in March 2007. The Commission considers that its Mandate is "to ensure that all Laws, Policies, Programmes, and Administrative Mechanisms are in consonance with the Child Rights perspective as enshrined in the Constitution of India and the UN Convention
on the Rights of the Child. As defined by the commission, child includes those up to the age of 18 years.

**Rajiv Gandhi Scheme for Empowerment of Adolescent boys (RGSEAB)-Saksham**

The MWCD has recently launched a new centrally sponsored scheme for holistic development of boys. The scheme aims at an all round development of adolescent boys to make them self reliant, gender sensitive, aware citizens, when they grow up. In the first phase, the scheme shall cover all adolescent boys 11-18 in 20 selected districts from 8 states benefitting nearly 6 lakhs adolescent boys annually. ICDS will be utilised for the Saksham scheme. (Available at http://wcd.nic.in/sites/default/files/24-05010215wcdmedia.pdf)

**Conclusion**

India has passed a number of laws and launched number of schemes post independence till date for the welfare, care and protection of children but still we have a long way to go. Though, the introduction of ICPS and RTE brought the issues of children in difficult circumstances in the limelight, there is still a long way to implement or putting in place a strong safety net and rehabilitation plan for street children. Street children though are in big number but invisible and this invisibility makes them deprived from all rights and entitlements. All the programmes have been designed in such a manner that covers some aspects partially. It concludes that there is a dire need to design programme focusing only on the phenomena of street children and its consequences. Rehabilitation Schemes need to be redesigned keeping in mind the need of a child and his/her family too.

If all the children of the country are to be afforded a safe and secure environment to grow up, there are a lot of issues which need to be addressed adequately as states still need to build a perspective on children issues, implementing district level plans, assessing the need of children district wise, sufficient data and adequate documentation related with
vulnerability of children, quality and adequacy of infrastructure (manpower and homes), sensitization of stakeholders, concerned department, high profile officials, care takers, service providers, etc. Interdepartmental collaboration amongst the various departments responsible for care and protection and welfare of children is the key to success of all programmes.
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