

PRESS NOTE

A two-day *National Consultation on Children and Internal Migration in India* will be held on 22 and 23 September 2015 at the India Habitat Centre, New Delhi. The consultation is organized by Aide et Action International, in collaboration with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and Bernard van Leer Foundation.

Internal migrants – estimated at nearly 30 percent (326 millions) as per NSSO 2007-2008 - are a critically vulnerable population, deprived of social protection entitlements, excluded from government policies, and schemes, and prey to ruthless exploitation. As per UNESCO 2013 report on Social Inclusion of Internal Migrants in India, around 15 million children in India are migrants. Most of the children accompany their parents to the urban worksites like construction, stone quarries and brick kilns where they are excluded from accessing basic services like nutrition, schooling, and healthcare.

An Aide et Action & Bernard van Leer Foundation study (2013) on the status and condition of young migrants living at worksites located in 8 cities across the country - Delhi, Chennai, Bhopal, Bhubaneswar, Jaipur, Patna, Hyderabad and Guwahati - portrays a very grim picture of the children and their conditions. It indicates that 90% seasonal migrant children are excluded from accessing the ICDS services whereas 80% school going children do not access education near worksites. While 65% of the children suffer from ill health, 40% work as child labour and experience various kinds of abuse and exploitation. Needless to say, “girl children endure many more deprivations than boys”, “receive less nutrition and less care than boys, and often have to do double work, at work sites as well as at home.” The adolescent girls living at the worksite are more vulnerable to abuse and sexual violence.

Therefore, this consultation is going to plan and devise meaningful and effective government programme, convergence and policy on several critical issues affecting migrant children:

- 1. Portability of government entitlements and service-need for convergence and policy**
- 2. Tracking and mapping of migrant children at source and destination**
- 3. Access to child care, health, nutrition, crèche and Anganwadi at worksites**
- 4. Inclusive access and right to education of migrant children**
- 5. Decent housing and healthy environment at worksites for migrant families**
- 6. Migrant child labour and safety and security of adolescent girls living in worksites**
- 7. GO-NGO-Corporate partnership for the welfare of migrant and children at worksites**

The consultation will bring together eminent activists, academics, scholars, UN agencies, civil society organisations, corporate and government representatives. The recommendations will be shared with the government for its perusal and positive action.

Date and venue: 22-23 September 2015, India Habitat Centre, New Delhi

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