Final Evaluation Report

Project "Ensuring well-being and protection of children of victims of commercial and sexual exploitation and trafficking in Mumbai"

India, 2019

educo

Member of ChildFund Alliance

ACRONYMS

CWC	Child Welfare Committee
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
LSE	Life Skill Education
NCC	Night Care Centre
RLA	Red Light Area
VOCSET	Victims of Commercial Sexual Exploitation and Trafficking

Executive summary extracted from document "Final evaluation report of the project "Ensuring well-being and protection of children of victims of commercial and sexual exploitation and trafficking in Mumbai" by PRERANA and Educo, in India in February 2019.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

INTRODUCTION

The project envisions a life of dignity that is free from violence and exploitation for the children of women victims of commercial sexual exploitation and trafficking (VOCSET). Children of VOCSET are at high risk of neglect, abuse and exploitation and are dropping out of school. One of the path-breaking interventions run by partner NGO PRERANA is providing alternative and comprehensive care to children, during the time they are without mother's care, in the red-light district, thereby protecting them from the dangerous and traumatizing influence of the sex trade in the red-light areas.

This project aims at ensuring wellbeing of these children through providing quality alternate care facilities and consistent outreach support to ensure children do not get trafficked into the exploitative life in the sex trade.

The project's specific objective is to end the inter-generational cycle of trafficking and violence against children of women victims of commercial sexual exploitation and trafficking in 3 red light districts in Mumbai.

A final project evaluation was planned in order to determine the results of the project and to learn from its accomplishments.

The evaluation was conducted in Mumbai, where the project has been implemented, with travel to the different Night Care Centre (project sites) – Kamathipura Centre, Falkland Road Centre and Turbhe Centre.

METHODOLOGY APPLIED

The evaluation study is primarily qualitative and descriptive although it will also utilize the quantitative method as applicable particularly in measuring the results of the project following its logframe.

Due to its primarily qualitative approach, the method for gathering primary data is through Focus Group Discussions (FGD), and where FGDs are not feasible individual, or group interviews will be conducted among identified participants.

Secondary data will be used to support triangulation of data. In terms of accomplishment of the project objectives, the actual accomplishment will be identified against the indicators in the project logframe. PRERANA will engage an external consultant to support the final evaluation.

The evaluation will implement a child-friendly approach in the conduct of sessions with children.

Field visits will be organized by the PRERANA staff to project sites/ Night Care Centres to facilitate the process of evaluation.

The key activities of the evaluation include the following:

- Desk review

The project document was analysed to find out how the project design responds to the identified issues. In addition, preliminary data, baseline information, different reports, meeting/workshop with relevant staffs of PRERANA will be

considered to analyse in which extent the project has achieved its outcomes.

- Field visits

The field visits were done to analyze the following activities:

  - Direct observation together with the project participants.
  - Focus Group Discussions (FGD) or interviews with key stakeholders: Children, Parents, Teachers, Social Workers, Members of the Child Welfare Committees, Police and NGO stakeholders.
  - Meetings with PRERANA Social Workers.

- Data analysis and report writing (draft and final) to include qualitative and quantitative data, triangulation of findings etc.

- Debriefing with PRERANA and Educo.

MAIN ACHIEVEMENTS

Over the years the intervention by the project has transformed lives of close to 25,000 children in the red-light district of Kamathipura, Falkland Road and Vashi-Turbhe.

- The cases of child labour, child exploitation and violence against children has reduced to nil in the community.

- The number of children left unattended during the business hours at the red-light area has reduced drastically.

- 297 children from the red-light area were able to avail shelter at the Night Care Centre with 25 new admissions in the last one year.

- 241 children avail recreation facilities. 141 children availed study classes at the NCC.

- Basic Metabolism Report indicate that there is scaled improvement in the overall health, boys and girls in the 3 Night Care Centre. Cases of TB and scabies reduced to nil.

- 53 children participated in the Ekta (meaning Unity) meeting, an open platform based on child's right to participate offers space for discussion on various issues and concerns. These meetings are supervised by the caregivers at Night Care Centers.

- 63 children, boys and girls in the age group of 1 – 12+ attended Counselling sessions in the period Nov '17 – March '18.

- 41 children attended Life-Skill workshops. Attitudinal and behavioural change was observed in them.

- 36 new school enrolment was recorded for the year 2017 – 2018. School attendance was consistent at 83%. School retention for the same period was recorded at 86%.

- The number of mothers participating in capacity building workshop increased to 67 by the end of 31st March 2018. Most mothers have access to bank accounts. It has been observed that mothers willingly take initiative in decision making for their children.

ANALYSIS OF EVALUATION CRITERIA

Relevance

The project objectives have been able to identify the key issues of intergenerational trafficking. Since its inception, the project has been able to transform lives of close to 25,000 children by supporting their education, nutrition, healthcare, offering safe and protected living condition, psychosocial well-being while safeguarding their rights and dignity. The project has worked with 30,000 prostituted mothers, equipping them to engage in the growth and development of their children. Strategic partnership with key stakeholders has benefitted the project. Stakeholders have become more involved, conversant and sensitive over the years as they continue to support the project.

During the project inception, Prerana witnessed a high level of discrimination towards the children for school admissions. The project has helped reduce discrimination to a large extent. Result of which is seen in all children in Prerana's Night Care Centre being enrolled in government-aided schools. Children are excelling in their academics and have been able to enroll in scholarship programs for higher studies.

The unique initiative of NCC offers 24X7 services of protected place to stay, formal education, healthcare, nutrition, creative learning, medical benefits and recreational facilities to the children of red-light area.

Effectiveness

The Night Care Centre innovated by Prerana offers to these children the much needed safe and secure sleeping place under professional and competent adult supervision. Children are healthy and happy.

Prerana engages with the VOCSET mothers on regular basis. Mothers acknowledge the effort and commitment of Prerana towards their children. Mothers recognize the value of education for their children. They have gradually started to take decisions for their children's development and future.

Regular visits are conducted by the Monitoring & Evaluation Manager and Project Heads for efficient monitoring of the project. Examples of monitoring mechanisms include monthly Program reviews are conducted to address the challenges and gaps, key improvements are highlighted; meetings are conducted with the participants on monthly basis to solicit and discuss their views and opinions on the current project.

The caregivers at the NCCs themselves receive routine 'in-house' training and capacity building.

The primary duty-bearers also work closely with the Child Welfare Committees, Police, CSOs, School authorities, government hospitals and health care workers. These duty-bearers engage with the stakeholders on regular basis to discuss issues and concerns.

Highly skilled team of Outreach Workers at Prerana strategized a module to reach out to the 'at-risk' children in these 3 RLAs. The unattended children are rescued and enrolled in the Night Care Centres, offered by Prerana. Till date, the initiative has been successful in salvaging many vulnerable boys and girls from the RLAs. Prerana's consistent advocacy towards sensitizing the community, people and stakeholders on human-trafficking has yielded key results. Since the inception of the Project, children trafficked from the 3 red-light districts has reduced to just 1 or 2. Not a single child is left unattended.

To build children's interest in studies, professional teachers are hired to tutor children at the NCCs during the Study Classes. Career guidance program and Creative Learning is introduced to make studies interesting. The year 2017–2018 saw a consistent attendance of 83%. School retention was maintained at 86%.

Regular healthcare and health camp sessions are conducted for the children. Children are counselled about health and hygiene. They have access to clean and nutritious food 3 times a day with snacks during tea time. Improved health of the boys and girls of all age groups is evident from the annual BMI reports.

The psychosocial health of children has also seen drastic improvements. Children receive regular counselling and LSE sessions. Children have showcased a positive attitudinal and behavioural change over a period of time.

Prerana has been instrumental in building capacities of a wide range of key stakeholders in order to achieve the desired results. To name a few, the CWCs, Police, CSOs, Government Hospitals, Healthcare workers, Schools and Social workers.

Efficiency

The resources (financial, human, technical support) have been timely allocated, and strategies effectively deployed to achieve project results.

Most of the outputs have been delivered in a timely manner. External factors like the absence of a Counsellor and LSE Educator at Prerana affected the timeline of the program, but to a negligible extent. A dedicated counsellor and life-skill educator have already been brought on-board for the project.

Regular project reviews assist in monitoring the progress of the program and use of the resources.

A few highlights which have been highly effective at Prerana include:

- A dedicated Child Protection Officer at the NCCs to ensure Child Protection.
- Child Protection Policy adherence for all staff members, volunteers, donors.
- Child Safety Audit is conducted twice a year.
- Surprise visit is done on monthly basis.
- Routinely 'in-house' workshops and seminars are conducted for the Prerana staff to build their capacities.
- Counselling sessions are provided to the NCC staff and helpers in order to capacitate them with relevant skill sets to engage with children at the Centres.
- Project Management System would fail without children's participation. Children at the NCCs are encouraged to plan, decide and actively contribute in running the NCCs.

Inclusiveness

From the very commencement the participants and the stakeholders are encouraged to contribute to program planning and implementation. The program at the three NCCs is devised with key suggestions from the children keeping in mind their needs and requirements. Children's Collective is one of its kind platforms, offering opportunity to children of all age groups, boys and girls to discuss about activities and events to be implemented at the NCCS under the supervision of a caregiver.

Similarly, Prerana discusses about the project with all the key stakeholders. Inputs and suggestion are taken. Relevant recommendations are implemented, and stakeholders are kept in loop about the progress. Roles and deliverables are divided to avoid duplication of work.

Various activities and events like dance therapy, LSE sessions, counselling, Children Collective motivate the children to express their thoughts and opinion. The children are free to share their likes and dislikes at the NCCs. They are motivated to see that their views are valued, utilized to run the NCCs. The process has helped build confidence in the children and invites them to participate in the events.

Sustainability

Prerana's success story has inspired many other organisations, corporates, partners and individuals. Prerana has received overwhelming response from these corporates and partners who wish to be the part of this change.

Eminent organizations like ASSKAM, Epic Foundation, Johnson & Johnson, Larsen & Toubro and even a few government institutes lend their support to the project through finances, infrastructure, medical conveniences and advocacy opportunities.

In case of project closure, the participants are likely to explore external support and resources to avail care and protection. Prerana has been mindful about the very fact. The project is therefore devised, to cater the significant need of capacity building and empowerment to equip the participants for their future.

One result of sustained advocacy and capacity building by the leading CSO is that instances of police following standards while intercepting in cases of child protection has improved and is likely to continue. Advocacy with schools over the years has ensured that all the schools in the red-light areas would allow admission to the children without any discrimination. The change is likely to be long lasting.

The VOCSET mothers and their children are less likely to continue the project without the support and guidance of Prerana. The children at the red-light district would remain susceptible and dangerously exposed to risk of the unsafe environment until commercial sexual exploitation and trafficking is eliminated from the root.
The VOCSET mothers are homeless, in captivity and themselves without a support mechanism and hence in the absence of a support mechanism it is going to be difficult for the mothers on their own to continue to protect their children from the dangers of the RLAS.

Impact

The project proved to be a ray of hope for the children and their mothers the victims of commercial sexual exploitation and trafficking in the 3 RLAs where Prerana works.

We engaged with 13 young adults during the feedback process. They remember staying at the NCCs from as young as 2 to 3 years until they reached the age 18 – 19. The young adults came across as confident, energetic and determined young individuals. Most of them have completed their education and have taken into eminent careers. The young adults accredit Prerana and their staff members who have been genuinely interested in their lives. The project was instrumental in rescuing and restoring their lives. Today, these young adults are happy, healthy and responsible members of the society.

The project has worked with 30,000 prostituted mothers over a period of time. Frequent counselling and knowledge sharing interventions have made the mothers understand the importance of education for their children. Mothers actively engage with Prerana's staff for guidance on career prospects or exposure on higher education for their children. They make healthy choices for their children. Mothers take ownership and spend more time with their children. The intervention has drastically reduced the number of unsupervised children at the red-light area to zero.

LESSONS LEARNED AND GOOD PRACTICE

Existing good practices of the project have been beneficial for the participants and have helped in achieving the Project results. These practices to continue in the future.

During the feedback process, the team proposed a written brief from the counsellor and the life-skill educator on 'How Prerana's children are different'. The agenda of the brief is to highlight minute details of each child i.e. behaviour, likes, dislikes, interests etc. along with his background in order to analyse and offer corrective counselling to the child.

Other factors which can be considered in the future are as follows: -

- Counsellor and LSE members to engage with the eco-system of the child more closely to be able to take effective measures to tackle the children's problem.

- Prerana to strengthen the association with stakeholders through frequent engagements to address gaps and challenges.

- Prerana to equip stakeholders with skill sets through relevant workshops and seminars

RECOMMENDATIONS

Children

- The Star System (a performance-based assessment system) has worked well for children aged 6 to 12years. They are motivated to perform well at what they do. Prerana to further strengthen the initiative with innovative and variance in the awards. Prerana should review their behaviour modification protocol next year involving experts from the mental health profession.
- To ensure children's participation moves from 'Adult-Initiated, Shared Decisions with Children to Child-Initiated and Directed', Prerana should invest in training their staff to take this process forward.
- Continuation of outdoor recreational and educational visits like Camps and Picnics. These visits encourage learning and give them exposure to the outside world.

Mothers

- A proposal was made to introduce discussion sessions for the mothers on gender and equality.
- Role of Prerana to remain as a catalyst for the program, to reduce the mothers' dependence on the organisation.
- Conduct research work on the financial status of the women while in the trade. This would help analyse the means and patterns of spending of the mothers.
- Strengthen the engagement of the mothers with the teachers. Social workers can become a link to conduct these engagements and do the follow-ups. Prerana to come up with a concrete plan to facilitate the dialogue and engagements.

Young Adults

- Children draw a lot of inspiration from the young adults who once stayed at Prerana NCC. Prerana invites the young adults to share their story and experience with the children availing the Night Care Centre through a unique platform, 'Open House' and their 'Career Guidance program.' The initiative has proved impactful and is recommended to be continued in the project.
- Continue exploring programs for the young adults in order to help them acquire relevant knowledge and skill to become self-sustained.
- To strengthen Prerana's exit-policy for girls in the age of 18-years and above.

Teachers

- Addressing the eco-system of the child before his/her rehabilitation, becomes significant. Evolve a module to provide a holistic approach on understanding the lives of the children of the women VOCSET and on the other relevant topics of working with children with trauma.
- Structured Parent-Teacher meeting to be facilitated by Prerana between the mothers of children of VOCSET and the teachers to be eventually mainstreamed.

Police

- Prerana to involve stakeholders like the police right from the beginning of the project.

- Prerana to conduct frequent advocacy seminars and workshops for the police for sensitizing the police on the issue of intergenerational sex trafficking.

Psychosocial Assistance

- Since it's difficult to get counsellors, Prerana to train its in-house social workers on topics on psychosocial issues, First Aid.

NGOs

- Prerana to work with CSOs on advocating the right-based approach – the foundation of the project.
- Collaboration with the other CSOs (working on the similar cause) while designing the project is recommended.

Social Workers

- Training with sessions on relevant child protection and child protection laws and policies and their applicability will help the social workers equip themselves better in understanding and applying these policies in individual cases.
- Prerana to design a plan for its social workers with respect to different stakeholders. Designing a plan for the social workers will help them work on defined roles and responsibilities. It would highlight the expected deliverables from the stakeholders, thereby helping them in efficient networking.