

People's Cultural Centre (PECUC)

Another Childhood is possible: Exploitation to Development

PECUC has experienced that safe and quality Education through fulltime schooling can be the pre-requisite for eradicating Child labour

Somnath Majhi (Disguise Name) from Mushakhori panchayat, Patna block, district Keonjhar. His father and mother are daily wage labourers. But as their combined income was not enough to provide two meals a day and meet the requirements of the family, Somnath was pushed into becoming a labourer while he was studying in class 6th. Although he did not want to discontinue his study being pressurised he had to migrate to a nearby block to work in a brick kiln unit. The members of the Child protection committee along with members of Sishusava [children's association] promoted by PECUC motivated his family members and rescued Somnath & admitted to SradhaBhawan., Child Rights resource center cum motivation center run by PECUC in the village. After six months Somnath was enrolled in Class 7th. He cleared the Class 10 exam during 2018 and now continuing his studies. He says, "After completing my education I want to join Indian Police Service".

Monali [disguise name], dropped out in Class 6th was working as a domestic labourer with a monthly salary of Rs. 200 per month. The village level child protection committee promoted by PECUC helped her to back home and also got her admitted in SradhaBhawan, child motivation centre run by PECUC. After three months she was enrolled in Kasturba Gandhi Valika Bidyalaya at Batapandugandi village at Jashipur. She has completed Class 7th and enrolled in Class 8 at Rairia Govt. Girls High School at Saharpada, block of Keonjhar district where she cleared the Class 10 examination. Monali is now continuing her education at Anchalika Mahavidyalaya in Swampatana. She says, "Continuing my studies and appearing for the 10th examination is like getting a basket full of happiness. After completing my education I will become a social worker to motivate, educate and make the people of my community aware about the importance of educating the girl child".

This is just story of two children, there are many, due to PECUC's intervention they have got back their childhood. **PECUC has facilitated rescue and rehabilitation of 33369 numbers of child labourers working in various sectors, during three decades of its journey.**

A village name Badapadiaposi of Mushakhori Gram panchayat of Patna block of Keonjhar district of Odisha is surrounded by dense forest. The people of this village mostly depend on daily wage and small scale of farming. For daily wage the residents of this village moved outside of the village. The village is having 126 households dominated by ST & SC population. During 2009 when PECUC started its intervention in the village there were 33 Children those were engaged as labour like grazing cow/goats, domestic labour, working in hotels/dhabas, working as helper in truck. Through various means PECUC mobilised the community and with an aim to make the village child labour free. For the said purpose PECUC has formed children collectives, child protection committees and mother's self help group in the village. Sradha bhavan the motivation cum-child rights resource center was opened in the village where children were motivated towards education through joyful teaching learning methods by the appointed multipurpose volunteer who was from the same village and same community. In due course of time through regular interaction, home visit, inclusion of children in the sishusava [children association] and child protection committees and mothers self help groups and through the Sradha bhavans gradually children are withdrawn from labour and enrolled in School. At the same time parents of the working children were facilitated to access different poverty alleviation schemes like MGNREGS etc. Mothers of the working children were facilitated with various income generation activities to supplement the family income. After a period of 6 years of intervention in the year 2015 the village is declared as child labour free by the Panchayat in the Gramsabha.

Like wise PECUC has facilitated to make 17 villages of swampatana block of Keonjhar district and 1 panchayat of Baliana block of Khordha district Child Labour free.

National Child Labour Project a flagship programme of Govt of India, Ministry of Labour & Employment in partnership with Govt of Odisha Department of Labour & ESI, - 350 child labourers were rehabilitated under this programme by PECUC in Khordha & Keonjhar districts of Odisha.

PECUC has taken multifarious strategic actions for eradication of child labour

- Identifying child labour

- Conducting rescue operations
- Organising residential motivation camps
- Mainstreaming the working children through education ensuring enrolment and retention in schools
- Establishing motivation center i.e Sradha bhavan
- Providing preparatory education, Bridge course and supplementary education in Sradha Bhabans
- Promoting child protection mechanism at community level by facilitating formation and strengthening of child protection committees at village level and counselling of parents.
- Promoting alternative livelihood opportunities for the parents of child labour families which includes mothers/women self help groups formation and strengthening, linkage for income generation activities
- Advocating for appropriate legislations & its implementations
- Awareness generation through development and distribution of information, education and communication materials, campaigns, using various media, cultural action
- Capacity building of different stakeholders-
- working with trade Unions, teachers associations, CSOs networks , Employers associations
- promoting child participation by facilitating formation and strengthening of Sisu Sabha
- Working with local self government ,elected representatives.
- Working with schools to make it child friendly

During three decades of intervention PECUC has learned that total eradication of child labour is possible. Safe and quality Education through fulltime schooling can be the pre-requisite for eradicating Child labour

PECUC (People’s Cultural Centre), a non-Government, non-profit voluntary organization with its definite objectives, scientific approach and effective implementation strategies is a close knitted team of social activists and development professionals , who joins their hands during 1990 to promote sustainable social development activities. At present the organization has diversified its activities with focus on promotion and protection of rights of the children, women, aged, indigenous community, rural and urban poor and other marginalized sections in Odisha. PECUC directly works with the community, advocates for pro-poor policy and intends to advance human rights culture. PECUC focuses primarily on child rights ,While working at the community level PECUC has learnt that children, their parents, grand parents, their families and the community as a whole are trapped into a vicious circle of multiple problems which has led to gross violation of human rights. PECUC has prioritized to focus on the issues relating to Child rights ,deepening democracy , women empowerment, health & Sanitation, livelihood, rights of the senior citizens , emergency management & climate change adaptation too during these years.

Visit us at : www.pecuc.org

