

Day 3 Proceedings (23rd August 2007)

Plenary Session on "Market forces and their Impact on Child Rights"

Mr Shankar Venkateshwaran, Executive Director, American India Foundation mentioned that the negative impact of market forces was valueless education and seeing the human being as an economic being. Privatisation could increase the supply and choices of their services. The challenge is to see how the poor can negotiate for quality services from a point of strength. Mr Randhir Kr. Singh, Programme Coordinator, CEOEDECON, talked of projects and suggested to enlarge what works, change what does not work and improve what needs improvement. He stated that the demand for education as well as quality education is on the increase and that better than Government, Market can ensure that socially responsible behaviour takes place.



Panel Discussion on "Eradicate Extreme Poverty and Hunger"

Ms Andal Damodaran of the IFCW moderated the discussion. Ms Amrita Jain, Consultant, Mobile Creches mentioned that the cycle of poverty can be broken only by early intervention. She stressed that we should not forget the ground situation in India, with poor basic services for health, education and safe drinking water. The major challenge is how to influence the government and care about global partnerships. Ms Coleen Clare, a representative of the Domestic Violence Programmes for children in Australia, exclaimed that research work showed that women are especially effected by poverty, also facing problems of alcohol- & drug-abuse. She emphasized that the collaboration of organisations and governmental institutions such as police, court and family services were essential and necessary steps to be taken against poverty and violence. Dr Sumana Pandey, Teacher, Govt. Girls College mentioned that first poverty has to be defined to understand the situation of the children and that MDGs will be achieved very soon if we empower marginalised children through educational, financial and social elevation.

Today at a Glance <i>(Friday, 24th August)</i>	
0900 - 1330	Project / Site Visits
1330 - 1430	Lunch
1430 - 1500	Valedictory Function
1500 - 1530	Vote of Thanks
1530 - 1600	Tea & Departure

Panel Discussion on "Eradicate Extreme Poverty and Hunger - Promote Inclusion"

Dr. Neerja Sharma, Child development teacher at Lady Irwin College. She started her presentation by saying that one has to draw a linkage between education, hunger and poverty in order to get a clear picture of the entire gamut of issues related to the said topic of discussion. She added that inclusion does not necessarily mean going to school only but to be a part of any type of program related to education. Ms Annie Koshy mentioned that inclusion is not only about physical disability but also about gender inequality, poverty, etc. It is a myth that inclusion is only about education. Other aspects like, partnership, human resource, administration, socio-cultural context, etc. is often ignored.

She also cautioned that one model of education does not fit all. There may be different models for each as resources and capabilities are different.

Dr Manjula Mehra specified that philosophically, inclusive education is about creating an atmosphere that increases participation in learning and reduces barriers. The moderator Ms Ismail said that there are 600 districts in India whereas only 17 districts have inclusive education programme. India has just signed the convention on the Rights to Education of Children with Disability but it is yet to be ratified.



IFCW Membership Exchange

During lunch time a membership exchange between developed and developing countries took place. The delegates representing different Institutions, organisations and countries were invited to join the IFCW.

Plenary Session on “Government Facilitation towards achievement of the MDGs Political Will.”

Dr Rajshekar, Vice Chancellor, IGNOU mentioned that MDGs can be achieved if quality of life is improved for all countries. He said that basic issues of nutrition and education are important. Only 9% of those who finish school in India get the chance to enter College. The figure is 40% in OECD countries. When we integrate technology in education we should not forget the human factor for technology cannot teach, only a teacher can teach. Dr Parth J. Shah President, Centre for Civil Society stressed the importance of creating political will for MDGs. An alternative to the Top-Down approach is the Bottom-Up approach. We have the same old battles to fight to motivate the government to care of rights. The Govt. teachers in India have the highest salaries for teachers in the world. There is a movement from Right to Education to Right to Education of choice. He suggested the following points for school reforms - financial and pedagogical autonomy; convert financing to per child basis; link teacher's salary, increments to performance and independent learning evaluation.

Panel Discussion on “Promotion of Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women”

Ms Tina Oliya, Director, Holy Angel's School, mentioned that it is time to reorganize our school system with new values and that teachers should be the fountain of knowledge. Mr M. O. Peter, Director, Special Programmes, Deepalaya, in his presentation drew the attention of the participants to the specific target set for the Millennium Development Goal 3, namely, Elimination of Gender Disparity in Primary and Secondary Education preferably by 2005 and at all levels by 2015. He illustrated facts and figures relating to the economic, social and educational progress of women in India since independence. Referring to the achievement of the target spelt out for the MDG 3, he pointed out that although there has been significant increase in the percentage of girls' enrollment from 1950-51 to 2004-05. More than half of the females in the age group 15 to 19 in India are still illiterate, compared to less than 10% in China. The session was moderated

by Ms Sharon Osborne, Treasurer, IFCW. Dr. Shradha Kapoor, Reader Lady Irwin College, Delhi talked on the “Issues of Globalization Policy and Empowerment of women” and dealt with gender preferences in any Indian family, which is governed by hierarchy, patriarchy, pluralism and exclusion

Panel Discussion on “Youth Participation in Development and their relevance to MDGs”



The session started with an enlightening speech given by Ms Poonam, one of Deepalaya's students, on her experiences on 'Importance of Education'. She talked

of educating more girl children and women in the current scenario in the quest for achieving their rights. Later, volunteers from PRAVAH shared their experiences of their working under an initiative namely, 'Students Mobilization Initiative of Learning through Exposure' (SMILE) which focuses on 'Development for all'. They shared that during the said initiative they were faced with some very pressing questions i.e. what is meant by development? Is it the rise in GDP, movement from rural to urban or movement from developing to the developed? And if this is not development then what does development really mean? The discussion was further facilitated by two documentary films which PRAVAH team had made with a special call and message. The underlying message that was contained in it was very hard hitting and covered wide ranging issues like, displacement of the poor and the marginalized, motivating youth to exercise their voting rights and help strengthen the ideals of democracy, justice and peace.

IFCW General Assembly

Mr. Bruce Rivers, President IFCW invited all those who were interested to attend the general assembly while clarifying that members alone could vote.

Cultural Evening

Students of Deepalaya vibrantly showcased the different dances from the states of India and enthralled the delegates. The day ended with the singing of the National Anthem.



In most developing regions, the average income of those living on less than 1\$ a day has increased

(The Millennium Development Goals Report 2007, UNICEF)