

बाल विवाह मुक्त भारत CHILD MARRIAGE FREE INDIA

सुरक्षित बचपन, सुरक्षित भारत | SAFE CHILDHOOD, SAFE INDIA

About your Organization

Integrated Development Foundation (IDF) is dedicated to the development of the deprived people (backward and poor rural women, people with disabilities, child labour, victims of trafficking and violence) of Muzaffarpur, Bihar. The organization is working on the following issue of Child Marriage, Child Trafficking, Child Labour and Child Sexual Abuse. The organization participated and organized Child Marriage Free India Campaign in **150 villages of Muzaffarpur district of Bihar under the project.**

The Campaign Activities included:

- 1. June Action Month** – In the month of June'2023 the organization conducted the action month with the objective of preventing children from exploitations & abuses with special focus on Child Trafficking and Child Marriage and prevented 5 children from child marriages and 14 children from child labour. The campaign was conducted in collaboration with DCPU & Labour departments and covered by 3 Print & 6 Electronic medias.
- 2. Campaign Against Child Marriage during Shravani Mela:** During the months of July and August'2023 campaign for Child Marriage Free India was conducted through camps to aware and sensitize the masses (Kanwariyas) to contribute in stopping the child marriages by giving their consent through pledges. In this campaign approx. 25,000 people signed the pledges.
- 3. 16 October 2023 - Child Marriage Free India Campaign Event** – The campaign event was conducted in 5 locations / blocks by covering 150 villages in collaboration with DCPU, Panchayati Raj, Education and ICDS departments with notifications issued by Education department. The campaign was organized in 150 villages of Muzaffarpur district, with an outreach of 26825.
- 4. November to December Action Month:** From 20th November to 19th December'2023 action month was observed with the objective of free the children from exploitation & abuses with special focus on Child Trafficking and Child Labour and prevented 12 children child labour. The campaign was conducted in collaboration with DCPU, SJPU & Labour departments and covered by 5 Print & 7 Electronic medias.

Campaign Photos:



Campaign Media Coverage:

1. <https://www.facebook.com/61551556513564/posts/pfbid02xQrJNRqZ7BKioHHhkzTAdA81oQiGLkLGBs6Z1bufHcQSj3T3HqviNuwmjQdU3JNVI/>
2. <https://dhunt.in/PUJRI>
3. <https://sklivenews.in/?p=134100>
4. <https://sklivenews.in/?p=134792>
5. https://link.public.app/X1qQ1?utm_medium=android&utm_source=share

Background

Child marriage is not just an age-old social evil, but also a heinous crime that robs children of their childhood. Child marriage is a “crime against children” that violates basic human rights, minor girls are forced to marry and live a life of mental trauma, physical and biological stress, domestic violence including limited access to education and increased vulnerability to domestic violence. The consequences of child marriage are severe and extensive. Some of the specific consequences include: early pregnancies leading to complications and higher rate of maternal mortality and death of infants, malnutrition among both the infant and the mother,

increased vulnerability to reproductive health, disruption in girl's education and thereby reduction in opportunities of her personal and professional development, domestic violence and abuse, limited decision making powers in the household, and mental health issues.

India's Census 2011 revealed 12 million children were married before attaining the legal age, of which 5.2 million were girls. Globally, child marriage is identified as a crime and a menace that needs to be eliminated. It finds space in the UN Sustainable Development Goals, under target 5.3 of Goal 5 that states elimination of all harmful practices, such as child, early and forced marriage and female genital mutilation by 2025.

The latest National Family Health Survey (2019-21) shows that although there is a drop in the overall rate of child marriages, from 26.8% in the National Family Health Survey (NFHS 4) to 23.3% in NFHS-5, it is still high despite laws, programmes and schemes in place to address the issue.

Child Marriage Free India Campaign

Understanding the seriousness of the issue, the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India in W.P. Civil 382 of 2013 pronounced that the sexual intercourse committed by the husband upon his wife being under the age of 18 years with or without her consent can be constituted as rape. To address this, the most definitive and audacious commitment to end child marriage was made with the launch of [Child Marriage Free India campaign](#).

[Child Marriage Free India \(CMFI\)](#) is a nationwide campaign led by women leaders and a coalition of more than 160 NGOs spanning more than 300 districts working to eliminate child marriage in India. CMFI is working to attain the tipping point of child marriage, after which the society does not accept this evil practice and that will happen when the prevalence of child marriage is brought down to 5.5% by 2030, from the current national prevalence rate of 23.3%. This is being done by initially targeting 257 high-prevalence districts and gradually focusing on all the districts of the country.

Child marriage results in child rape, resulting in child pregnancy, and in a large number of cases, may lead to child deaths. For decades, we have been losing generations of our children to child marriage. The [Child Marriage Free India campaign](#) has received extended support from various Departments and Institutions of over 28 States. So far, across India more than 5 crore people have taken the pledge to end child marriage over the last one year through the efforts of the [Child Marriage Free India Campaign](#).

Know more about the [Child Marriage Free India \(CMFI\) Campaign](#): <https://www.childmarriagefreeindia.org/>



THE GOAL

Reduction of Child Marriage to 5.5% by 2030

as proposed in WHEN CHILDREN HAVE CHILDREN - TIPPING POINT TO END CHILD MARRIAGE (Ribhu, 2023)

DEMANDS OF THE CAMPAIGN



Ensure **access to free and quality education** for all children till class 12 (or 18 years of age, whichever is later)



Dedicated **budgetary allocation** for schemes and infrastructure for education and vocational training till class 12



Enable **real-time attendance data analysis** and intervention when irregularities occur



Effective **implementation and enforcement of laws** against child marriage for all sections of society

Addressing the issue of child marriage, requires a comprehensive and coordinated approach of different government departments, institutions, statutory bodies, and civil society organisations.

For India as a nation to end child marriage by 2030, the PICKET Strategy as proposed in WHEN CHILDREN HAVE CHILDREN - TIPPING POINT TO END CHILD MARRIAGE (Ribhu, 2023)



Policy for prevention, protection, prosecution: It is important to ensure parity in the enforcement of laws, and special laws must prevail over customary or personal laws.

The effective implementation and enforcement of existing laws and policies that prohibit child marriage along with swift and decisive justice delivery mechanism are most important steps in checking the prevalence of this crime against children. When prevention of crime is incorporated as a policy, it ensures that the state machinery as well as citizens feel responsible and accountable to prevent child marriage.



Investment in infrastructure, incentivisation and institutions: Investing in child protection institutions, education, healthcare, justice delivery, and rehabilitation framework builds layers which work to prevent and protect children from abuse and exploitation apart from providing legal and mental health support for girls in child marriages.

Infrastructure to support girls at imminent risks of marriages, like institutional alternative care and residential educational facilities are urgently needed to stop their marriages, abuse and exploitation, and provide them with resilient alternatives.

Incentives in the form of conditional cash transfers have shown impact in communities to keep girls in schools delaying marriage decisions. Universalization of these to at-risk families has the potential to stop child marriages and trafficking and abuse of girls for both labour and sexual exploitation.



Convergence of departments, governments and stakeholders in the community: All schemes and interventions geared towards the protection, prevention, education, health and awareness of children and adults affected by child marriage need to operate in sync with each other. Child participation and empowerment is at the core of such convergence aimed at child centric community development.



Knowledge which equips all the stakeholders to combat child marriage: Enhancing knowledge empowers children, especially boys, to say no to child marriage. When a young man refuses to marry a minor girl, he breaks the cycle of generations of conditioning. It also gives agency to girls to raise their voice and complain when they are forced for marriage against their will or in violation of law. When children, parents, community members and stakeholders participate in decision making equipped with correct and latest knowledge, it can lead to collective action to prevent child marriage.



Ecosystem where child marriage does not thrive: Central to the PICKET strategy is an ecosystem where child marriage is non-existent. In a society where child marriage is pervasive, multi-pronged intervention at all levels is required. To change the societal perception, behaviour and acceptance towards child marriage, the response at scale requires an ecosystem level retaliation.



Technology for monitoring and deterrence to combat child marriage: Enabling real-time attendance data analysis will help reduce child trafficking, child marriage and drop-out rate in schools. Different states are already using technology for awareness campaigns, supporting and monitoring programme interventions, augmenting education and skills outreach. The use of machine learning and artificial intelligence needs explorations in support of child protection and creating a safe and harm-free ecosystem for children.

Tipping Point to end child marriage

WHEN CHILDREN HAVE CHILDREN - TIPPING POINT TO END CHILD MARRIAGE Book authored by Mr Bhuwan Ribhu is an action plan to eliminate child marriage in India by 2030. It looks at the existing data on child marriage and lists 257 districts in India where the issue of child marriage is worst, which means where the occurrence of this evil practice is highest as compared to national numbers.

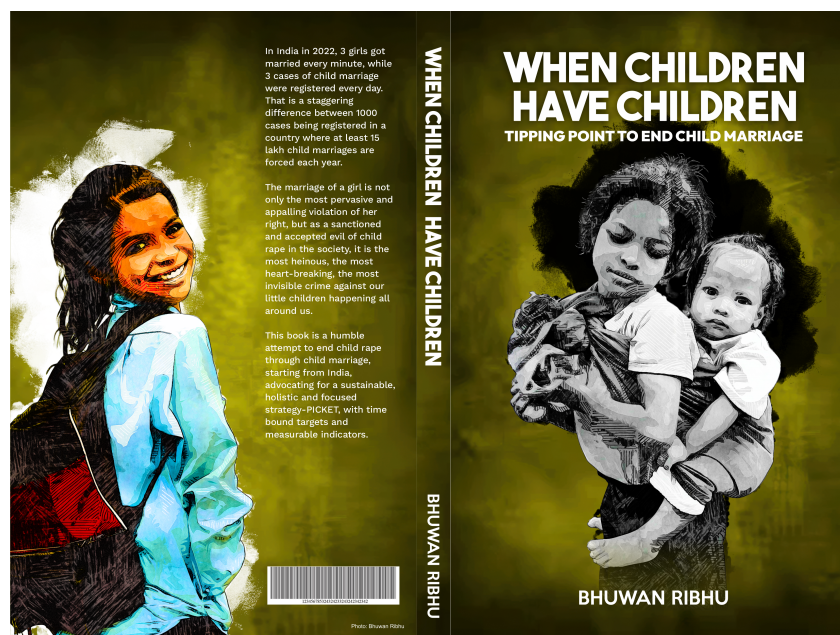
Tipping Point is the threshold required in an ecosystem needed to tilt the scale of the problem towards a point of no-return. The Tipping Point of Child Marriage is the critical point after which the society does not accept child marriage.

Tipping Point Methodology

The aim of reduction of 60 percent of child marriage is assumed to bring down the incidence of child marriage to **5.5 percent** in the next nine years from 2021, from the last available estimates i.e., NFHS-5, till 2030. An additional assumption is that such a focused and elaborate intervention against child marriage would have a ripple effect.

In order to reach the Tipping Point, the Author proposes strategy at national and district level.

- a. **National Level strategy** where Governments, Institutions, statutory bodies, etc. work towards prevention, protection, increased investment, improved prosecution, convergence and use of technology for monitoring
- b. **District Level strategy** is similar to national level strategy but includes district administration, Panchayats, civil society, NGOs, other functionaries, parents and children who work collectively to prevent, report, and take action against child marriage



I am Puja Kumari of Mishraulia village in Sakra block of Muzaffarpur district. I am 16 years old and residing at said village with my family. There are six members in my family. Apart from mother and father I have two brothers and one sister. My brothers are just literate. My family has lower strata in the society and parents as well as brothers are daily wage agriculture labour. My elder sister was also the victim of child marriage.

I am studying in class 10th and having ambition to complete my education and do some thing in my life. One day some relatives came to my house and I came to know that they were talking about my marriage. I opposed them and told them that first I have to complete my education and then after I will think about my marriage. In my absence they convinced my parents that the probable groom is well earner and hardly you will get such groom and well-off family. Lastly my parents agreed to marry me. They tried to convince me but I was determined that I am not going to marry. I told my parents that I will marry as per your wish but after completing the maturity age. They promised me but I noticed that they are chitting me. So, I discussed it to my one of Saheli (friend) and narrated the whole stories. She assured to help me in this regard.

After two days my friend came to my house with one bhaiya ji named Rupesh Kumar from IDF organization / sanstha. He talked with my parents and tried to convince my parents. During the discussion he called the Mukhiya and Sarpanch also and discussed all about child marriage and warned my parents as well as Mukhiya & Sarpanch to stop this child marriage. Finally, my parents got convinced and gave their consent by signing the consent paper / Vachan patra. In this way I got success in stopping my child marriage. After this, same day a meeting was called by the Mukhiya & Sarpanch and in this meeting Rupesh Bhaiya described all about Child Marriage and its ill effects and described role & responsibilities of stakeholders i.e. PRI members, Community Leaders, Religious Leaders, Parents etc. When I was asked now what is my feeling than I told that ***“Man ke hare haar hai aur man ke jeete jeet. Es faisla se main bahut khush hun ab main apna padhayee puree karungee aur kuchh hunar sikhungi aur apne pair par khari hokar hi aage kaa kuchh sochungi. Main Rupesh Bhaiya, apni Saheli aur sabhee madad karene waloan kaa dhanywad karti hun ki unhone meri baat suni aur mujhe baal vivah ke daldal se bacha liya. Har ladki ko galat kaa birodh karna chahye.”***