INSTITUTIONALISED CHILDREN: SEMINAR ON STANDARDS OF CARE AND MENTAL HEALTH

14 & 15 March 2014, Amity University, Noida, (Adjoining New Delhi), India

Organised by

Udayan CARE
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Focused on South Asian Countries
Background
UNICEF estimates that 153 million children globally have lost one or both parents of which an estimated 43 million live in South Asia. Besides orphans, a substantial number of children are out of the family protective net and institutionalised as orphans, abandoned, abused, runaways or children in conflict with law. These children are often exploited and pushed to the margins of society.

While all children in need of care and protection are ‘vulnerable’, orphans as a group is even more ‘vulnerable’. Significant efforts are being taken by South Asian countries to tackle this problem in their respective regions. In India, for instance, the Government of India introduced the Integrated Child Protection Scheme (ICPS), which is a Centrally-sponsored scheme of Government-Civil Society Partnership, to strengthen the implementation of the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection) Act, 2000 (JJ Act), and alternative modes of care and protection, which also envisages “institutionalisation” as the last resort to take care of destitute children and re-integrate them in the society. Still, Child Care Institutions (CCIs) in all South Asian countries have been the traditional response to receive vulnerable children in need of care and protection.

Important issues include what constitutes standards of care and what are the current legislative and policy frameworks across South Asian countries to study how standards of care are defined and does mental health figure in this or not. Also how do countries perceive standards of care and do we make adequate provisions towards addressing mental health issues. How studies are also crippled by the fact that there is a serious dearth of data in all the South Asian countries regarding institutionalized children. Such issues and many more are going to be discussed during the seminar.

Why this Seminar?
The necessity for this seminar arises from the fact that despite so many children, especially in South Asia, being institutionalised, researchers, policy-makers and activists working on child rights feel handicapped in improving the protection system they work in, because of insufficient data and knowledge about current problems and practices at all levels of implementation of rules and regulations. Studies are also crippled by the fact that there is a serious dearth of data in all the South Asian countries regarding institutionalized children.

There is also no forum to discuss these issues, good practices and come up with possibilities of improving the protection systems. Important issues include what constitutes standards of care and what are the current legislative and policy frameworks across South Asian countries to study how standards of care are defined and does mental health figure in this or not? Also how do countries perceive standards of care and do we make adequate provisions towards addressing mental health issues? The gap in this domain is even more seriously felt when it comes to research on children’s psychological needs and mental well-being. Such issues and many more are going to be discussed during the seminar.

It is hoped that the seminar will develop means of bridging the gap between practitioners, academicians, state officials and NGOs. Hence, the seminar is expected to provide a platform to all relevant stakeholders working with institutionalised children to raise their concerns and also realise a more comprehensive approach to problems faced by children in need of care and protection. A significant outcome of this seminar is expected to be a strong advocacy strategy meant to influence key decision-makers as well as lawmakers to understand the importance and need for assessing institutionalised children and services for them, on several parameters including mental health and also to debate ways and means of effective implementation strategies.
Objectives and outcomes

Key Objectives of the Seminar

- To share the standpoint of South Asian countries in compliance with international standards on child protection in institutions.
- To analyze the role of institutions contributing towards child protection in South Asian countries.
- To present the good practices on standards of care and mental health provided to institutionalised children in South Asian countries.
- To identify the impediments faced by institutionalised children related to attachment, loss, grief and trauma, with a special focus on South Asian countries.
- To launch the Journal “Institutionalised Children: Explorations and Beyond (ICEB)”

Expected Outcomes of the Seminar

- To identify good practices that might be applicable to improve standards of care and mental health in institutions for children in South Asian countries.
- To endorse the importance of improving the quality of standards of care and mental health in institutions in order to achieve maximum child protection in South Asian countries.
- To recognize impediments facing children in institutions related to attachment, loss and grief, and trauma in South Asian countries.
- To integrate and apply knowledge, as gained from the discussions in the conference, on attachment, loss, and trauma in institutionalised settings in a culturally sensitive way to clinical work in South Asian countries, in policy and practice.
- To come up with a strategy on the way forward in the case of child rights in institutional care - investing in good practices in mental health care and services.

Call for manuscripts for the Seminar:
For paper or poster presentation during the Seminar, please consider submitting paper on topics that might be subject to further discussion during the event. The paper will be subjected to the academic committee and further communication will be established on the following proceedings including the specific guidelines and requirements for the paper/poster.

To register or request more information:
Please contact: Dr. Kiran Modi, Managing Trustee, Udayan Care on + 91- 11- 9810132736, 16/97, Vikram vihar, Lajpat Nagar-IV, New Delhi-110024, Tel. +91- 11- 46548105 / 46548106 or email ICEB-Journal@udayancare.org; kiranmodi@udayancare.org

For Further Details, please visit: www.udayancare.org
Business Sessions:

Day 1:

- Launch of the Journal “Institutionalised Children: Explorations and Beyond” (ICEB)
- Standards of Care and Mental Health in Institutions in South Asian countries as well as a global perspective
- South Asian Countries presentations on situations and challenges on issues related to children in institutions, including vulnerability, good practices, case studies, etc.

Panel discussions with eminent experts from South Asian countries, in the domain of child protection and child rights, on good practices related to institutional care, comprehensive and interactive presentations and case studies would assist participants in reviewing such standards in the South Asian region.

Day 2:

- Session on Attachment and Childhood Development
- Session on Trauma, Grief and Childhood Development
- Panel discussion on Resilience in Children in Institutional Care: Is it Really a Challenge?
- Panel discussion on Mental Healthcare in Institutional Settings: Constraints and Dilemmas
- Declaration on Mental Healthcare in Institutional Care and Open House

The seminar will give rise to heightened impetus to the rights of children in institutional care vis-à-vis best practices in mental healthcare. The purpose of the seminar and the journal is to stimulate ongoing interest in issues pertaining to institutionalized children and develop a dialogue around standards of care with special emphasis to mental health issues of children, such as trauma and attachment concerns.

Follow up after the Seminar

A final report of the proceedings (including the key conclusions and recommendations for action) is going to be submitted to the governments of these countries as well as civil society organizations. It will constitute the main tool to put together a proper follow-up to the outcomes of the seminar.
Organiser

Udayan Care is an Indian Non-Profit Organization, established in 1994, with a Vision, “To Regenerate the Rhythm of Life of the Disadvantaged”.

Udayan Care, founded on 7th February 1994, is a registered Trust focused on providing quality care to disadvantaged children and women. The aim is to nurture relationships that transform orphaned and abandoned children in our long-term foster homes, disadvantaged girls through education scholarships, and underserved youth and adults in IT & Vocational training centres. It is headquartered in Delhi.

Technical Committee

- Atiya Bose, Director Policy and Advocacy, Aangan
- Enakshi Ganguly/ Bharti Ali, Co-Directors, Haq Centre for Child Rights
- Luis Aguilar Esponda, Intern, Udayan Care
- Mamta Sahai, Member DCPCR
- Mohammad Aftab, National Manager, Child Protection, Save the Children
- Nina Nayak, Child Rights Activist, NCPCR member
- Razia Ismail, Director, India Alliance for Child Rights
- Sumitra Mishra, Country Director, iPartner India
- Tushar Anchal, Adviser, Child Protection, Plan India
- Vijaylakshmi Arora, Director-Policy & Advocacy, CRY
- Vikram Srivastava, Founder, Independent Thought (iThought)

Focused on South Asian Countries
ABOUT THE JOURNAL:
Institutionalised children are often at risk to leading marginalized existences. Current literature on this subject so far has been limited. The Journal “Institutionalised Children: Explorations and Beyond” evolved out of the need to expand our understanding of the developmental needs of such children and to offer a venue for professionals, policy makers and volunteers to share and exchange their ideas, their expertise and their knowledge. Representing all the South Asian countries it also broadens the depth and reach of this journal.

TARGET AUDIENCE:
The journal will be of interest to psychologists, psychiatrists, and caregivers in governmental and NGO organizations, volunteers, policy makers, social workers and university faculty who are interested in the care and study of institutionalised children. Students in these and other related disciplines in all the South Asian countries, as well as other mental health professional interested in these studies will find the journal useful.

SUBMISSION OF MANUSCRIPTS FOR THE JOURNAL:
The JICS Editorial Board is now inviting submissions of abstracts (five hundred words or less) on topics relating to research and exploration of work with institutionalised children. Abstracts must be original, without any prior publication and must be submitted in English. The abstracts are subjected to a non-peer-review process. The Editorial Board takes the final decision on publications and reserves the right to edit the final manuscript. Notification of acceptance, rejections or the need for revision will be given by a member of the editorial board. The final manuscript must be received by 10th February 2014 for inclusion in the first edition of this journal. The journal will be published every six months. Manuscripts not included in the first edition can be published in the second edition of the journal.

PERIODICITY:
The Journal will be published six monthly, first in spring and thereafter in fall. The first issue, tentatively entitled ‘Institutionalised Child Care in South Asian Countries’ is targeted for release in March 2014, in Delhi, India.

Editorial team for the Journal:
• Dr. Monisha Nayar-Akhtar: Psychologist/Psychoanalyst, USA, Director, Indian Institute of Psychotherapy Training, New Delhi, India (Editor in Chief)
• Dr. Kiran Modi: Founder Managing Trustee, Udayan Care, New Delhi, India
• Dr. Deepak Gupta: Adolescent and Child Psychiatrist, Founder director of “Centre for Child & Adolescent Wellbeing (CCAW)”, New Delhi, India
• Mr. Vikram Dutt: Senior Consultant, Rehabilitation, New Delhi, India
• Mr. Luis Aguilar Esponda, Master of Laws, Mexico (International Liaison Editor); presently in India.

To register or request more information about the Journal:
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