

বাল্য বিবাহ মুক্ত ভারত CHILD MARRIAGE FREE INDIA

সুরক্ষিত শৈশব, সুরক্ষিত ভারত | SAFE CHILDHOOD, SAFE INDIA

About your Organization

Bhabna Association For Peoples Upliftment (BAPU) 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 West Bengal. 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 **Murshidabad districts of West Bengal covering over 150 villages under the project.**

The Campaign Activities included:

- 1. Akshaya Tiritiya Campaign - Bhabna Association For Peoples Upliftment (BAPU)** was organized campaign during Akshaya Tiritiya 23 April to 25 April 2023 and conducted events in Berhampore. The campaign reached out to 40 religious leaders to pledge to prevent and end child marriage in their villages, districts.
- 2. June Action Month - Bhabna Association For Peoples Upliftment (BAPU)** the organization conducted the action month with the objective of Rescue and prevented 23 child marriages, 1 injunction orders and 2 FIRs got registered. The campaign was conducted in collaboration with Labour Commission departments and covered by 1 media with an outreach of 5000 directly and 7000 through online.
- 3. 16 October 2023 - Child Marriage Free India Campaign Event** – The campaign event was conducted in Murshidabad District's Sadar city Berhampore 150 villages in collaboration District Legal Service Authority(DLSA), Child Protection Unit(DCPU), Child Welfare Committee(CWC), Anti Human Trafficking Unit(AHTU) And Many others Govt. Department departments with notifications issued by District Legal Service Authority(DLSA) departments. The campaign was organized in Murshidabad districts, 150 villages 128 total program with an outreach of almost 1 Lacs Peoples.

Campaign highlights: **We have created a silent revolution through this campaign, and received accolades from various government departments.**

Campaign Photos: Photos are attach in last page.

Campaign Media Coverage: <https://www.newsbarat24hrs.com/বেচ্ছাসেবী-সংগঠন-বাপুর//> https://publicapp.co.in/video/sp_9rvrhftiqznga?share=true

And other activities etc.

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

Tippling Point to end child marriage

Noted child rights activist, author, Supreme Court lawyer and founder of CMFI campaign, Bhuwan Ribhu has authored a book - **'When Children Have Children: Tipping Point to End Child Marriage'** and put forth a framework advocating a sustainable, holistic and focused strategy with time-bound targets and measurable indicators to make India child marriage free by 2030. This book shows the path to eliminating child marriage in India within the next decade. As suggested by the author in the book, by adopting a systematic, highly focused, and intensive intervention model, over a phased timeline it is possible to reduce the national child marriage prevalence levels to 5.5% —the threshold, the tipping point, beyond which the prevalence is anticipated to diminish organically with reduced reliance on targeted interventions.

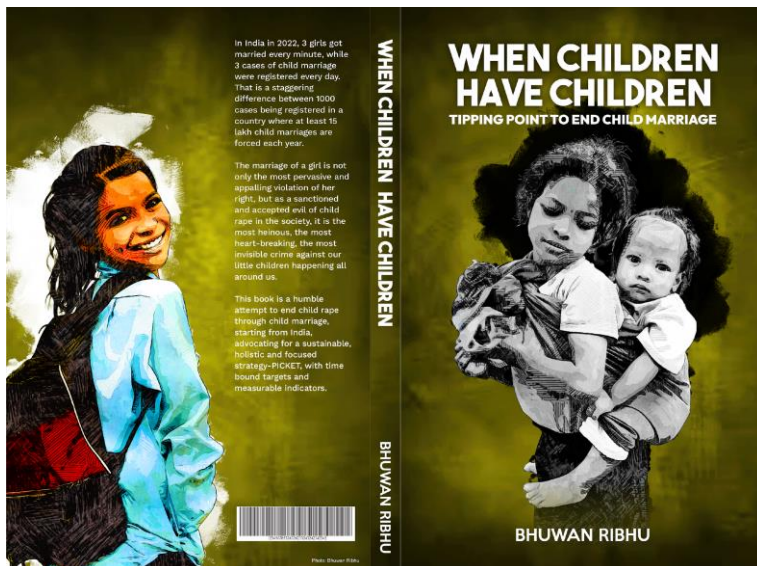
Tippling Point Methodology

The aim of reduction of 60% of child marriage (in each of the phases) is assumed to bring down the incidence of child marriage to 5.5% in the next 9 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. The tipping point analysis has been divided into two phases. The first phase will extend over a period of six years, starting in 2021. Subsequently, the second phase will span over a three-year period. It is expected that the national average for child marriage prevalence (percentage women aged 20-24 who were married before 18 years) would decline from 23.3% to 13.7% if the prevalence of child marriage is reduced by 60% in the 257 high-prevalence districts in the first phase followed by a further reduction of 60% in all districts across the country.

In order to reach the Tipping Point, the author has proposed a strategy at national and district level.

- National Level strategy** where Governments, Institutions, statutory bodies, etc. work towards prevention, protection, increased investment, improved prosecution, convergence and use of technology for monitoring
- 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



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.

The girl was a resident of Hariakana Para and studied in Shyamnagar High School.

The girl came home from school and heard that the family members were talking about her marriage. she was unable to defend herself from the constant pressure her family put on her.

Next day the girl went to the school and informed the headmaster that the family members was deciding her marriage And right now she didn't want to get marry. The headmaster of the school informed the CSW working in the area that a girl below 18 was getting married, and she did not want to get married, the marriage should be stopped.

She wants to continue her study. The CSW immediately went to the girl's house with head master and approached her parents, relatives. By uniting our voices, they compelled her family to drop the marriage plans. Reflecting on the situation, Sumi mother says, "We realised that we would made a big mistake by compelling our daughter to get married at an early age.

Now we want her to study well and pursue her interests. "Then The family members said that their financial condition is not good, so they thought about her daughter's marriage.

Sumi promised her parents that she would get married after her education was completed I talked to the girl and the headmaster, I talked to the girl's mother, she was thinking about getting married, the headmaster would take responsibility for her education, Now Sumi is happily continuing her education.



