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Secretary
Ministry of Panchayati Raj



Rajesh Bhushan
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Department of Health & Family Welfare

Vini Mahajan
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Anita Karwal
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Sujata Chaturvedi
Secretary
Department of Youth Affairs

Nagendra Nath Sinha
Secretary
Department of Rural Development

Indevar Pandey
Secretary
Ministry of Women & Child Development

D.O. No. M-11015/124/2021-CB

Dated: 31st March, 2022

Dear Chief Secretary,

Theme 3: Child Friendly Village

As you are aware, India is a signatory to United Nations 2030 Agenda for achieving inclusive, people-centric and holistic Sustainable Development through 17 identified Goals. To this extent, the Government of India is operating with strategic visioning, prioritization, and implementation methods to achieve Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) with the motto of "Leaving No One Behind" through "Whole of Government and Whole of Society" approach.

2. You will appreciate the SDGs are cross-cutting in nature and a particular SDG can be mapped to many Ministries which can be addressed through various schemes. Keeping this aspect in view, Ministry of Panchayati Raj has initiated thematic approach of relevance for Panchayats and villages through aggregating 17 SDG goals into 9 broad themes for localization of SDGs at grass-root level and their attainment through concerted and collaborative efforts of all concerned stakeholders. Since these themes address more than one SDGs, more than one Ministry/ Department are involved. For instance, **Theme 3: Child Friendly Village** addresses **Goal 4-** Quality Education, **Goal 5-** Gender Equality, **Goal 2-** Zero Hunger, **Goal 3-** Good Health and Well Being, **Goal 1-** No Poverty, **Goal 8-** Decent Work, **Goal 10-** Reduced Inequalities and very importantly **Goal 16** – Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions.

3. If a Gram Panchayat resolves to transform itself into a Child Friendly Village/Panchayat, it would envision, inter alia, working on four pillars connected to child survival, development, protection and participation. This would entail first and foremost efficient and effective working of women and child care facilities such as Anganwadis, Sub Centres and diligent work by ASHA, ANMs and Anganwadi Workers in the village thus covering the life cycle approach for child development. Every child born must survive. Once survival is ensured, healthy development of child assumes centre stage. Availability of adequate and nutritious diet to all children is essential to ensure proper development of cognitive ability and learning skills of children. Next would be the role of School teachers who, apart from parents, play a very influential role in ensuring emotional and psychological well being of children in their formative years. Emotional well being of children also depends on congenial environment at home, school and village in general. Child protection is essential for development. Thus, the village would need to provide safe, secure and clean environment to all children wherein each child, boy or girl, can develop to their full potential. Attention to adolescent health and needs is an area of growing concern. Child by definition is up to 18 years of age. Equal opportunities irrespective of gender, and inclusive development for children with disabilities requires understanding and support of all service providers, Panchayats and people. What we do today has bearing on the future of the children, not just in the context of children achieving their potential, but also the future of their village. Children's voices need to be heard and given the space to participate in their development and aspects connected to it. We often use children as voices for communication of what we want communicated. It is time we provided the platforms and mechanisms for children to participate and to be recognized in delivery of the rights of a child.

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4. Thus, if a Gram Panchayat is to become a 'Child Friendly Village/Panchayat', it would require full support of Departmental functionaries of School Education, Health & Family Welfare, Women & Child Development, Drinking Water & Sanitation, Youth Affairs & Sports, Rural Development, Panchayati Raj among others. In addition, if Non-Governmental organizations, Institutions and others working in the area, Youth Organizations such as the NYKS & the NSS are also involved in the task of facilitating the Gram Panchayat to become a 'Child Friendly Panchayat' by working with the local community to bring about action on the 4 pillars, then the goal can be realized faster. It would also be important to measure progress in this regard through the Report card from the children on whether the Village is Child friendly, along with a set of 20 Local Indicators relevant to the Panchayat, in a Local Indicator Framework (LIF) identified by the Expert Committee in it's report on 'Localization of SDGs in Panchayati Raj Institutions' which has already been shared with all States and stakeholders and is available on the web site of Ministry of Panchayati Raj : <https://www.panchayat.gov.in>.

5. It has been suggested to all States/UTs to organize meetings of all Gram Panchayats during the *Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav (AKAM)* iconic week allocated to Ministry of Panchayati Raj between April 11 to April 17, 2022 and meeting of Gram Sabha on 24th April on occasion of National Panchayati Raj Day wherein Gram Sabhas may resolve to focus on any one or more of the Nine Themes identified for realization of SDGs. All GPs in a Block/District, which undertake to focus on attainment of **Theme 3: Child Friendly Village**, would need to be provided special hand-holding support to work towards that goal. UNICEF has worked with some States on this and their expertise is being drawn upon for taking this forward jointly. Becoming a Child friendly village is a process that calls on Child friendly local governance not just from Panchayats but from Government as a whole, and whole of society. Continuous action on various aspects through preparation of a Child Friendly Village Plan, clear delineation and understanding of role and responsibility of all stakeholders, undertaking resource mapping factoring in resources available under various schemes of Central and State Government, other organizations, in a whole of society approach, taking stock of their roles and contributions in various aspects including Training, IEC, Advocacy, Monitoring and Recognition is necessary. It is felt that convergent action by all concerned Ministries/Departments among others at Central and State Government levels will go a long way in attainment of desired outcome. Eventually, all GPs/villages have to become Child Friendly Panchayat/village if SDGs are to be attained by 2030.

6. In Government of India, the Nodal Ministry for the **Theme 3- Child Friendly Panchayat/Village** is **Ministry of Women & Child Development**. All other Ministries and Departments, which are signatory to this Joint Letter, will provide full support under their ongoing schemes to this effort at the GP/Village level. We expect and hope that similar convergent action would be undertaken at the State and District level too and effectively communicated to all field functionaries and progress regularly monitored at High Level Committee constituted at State and District level.

With regards,

Yours sincerely,



(Indevar Pandey)

Ministry of Women & Child Development



(Vini Mahajan)

Department of Drinking Water & Sanitation



(Nagendra Nath Sinha)

Department of Rural Development



(Sunil Kumar)

Ministry of Panchayati Raj



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Department of Health & Family Welfare



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Department of School Education & Literacy



(Sujata Chaturvedi)

Department of Youth Affairs

To,

The Chief Secretaries,

All States/UTs

Copy to: Additional Chief Secretaries/ Principal Secretaries/Secretaries,
All Related Departments. All States/ UTs