REPORT OF THE NATIONAL CONSULTATION ON "CHILDREN & GOVERNANCE: IN THE CONTEXT OF FEDERALISM AND DEVOLUTION"

HAQ: Centre for Child Rights
B-1/2, Ground Floor, Malviya Nagar
Ph: +91-11-26673599, 26677412
Fax: +91-11-26674688
E-mail: info@haqcrc.org; Web: www.haqcrc.org

Table of Contents

Acknowledgements

HAQ: Centre for Child Rights is grateful to all the child rights groups who showed their interest and willingness to participate in the National Consultation on *"Children & Governance: In the Context of Federalism and Devolution"*. The Consultation was very timely as it coincided with the ongoing debate on implementation of the Fourteenth Finance Commission Recommendations. This debate has also been triggered due to the suddenness with which these recommendations have been brought into and voices of discomfort being around these recommendations raised by some of the significant States.

On one hand, where the economists and experts have been batting for bringing the fiscal federalism, the activist fora has been criticizing the newly brought in fiscal arrangements between Centre and States. This contradiction can be understood in the context of heavy budget cuts for most of the social security programmes and especially for children related programmes in the Union Budget 2015-16. With the shrinking fiscal space at the Union level for Centrally Sponsored Schemes, enhanced State autonomy to decide its expenditure towards social sector and thrust of privatization and consumer based relationship, we at HAQ, strongly felt that it is quite imperative for child rights group to gather and understand about these issues. This consultation was also an attempt to understand the governance issues and how these issues can be addressed in the new set of fiscal development.

We would like to thank Mr. Subrat Das from Centre for Budget, Governance and Accountability (CBGA) and Dr. Bishnu Mohapatra from Ajim Premji University for their guidance in designing the structure of this Consultation since inception.

HAQ is also grateful to Dr. A.K. Shivakumar, Dr. Bishnu Mohapatra and Dr. Vandana Prasad for chairing the sessions and triggering the crucial debates and bringing those debates on a meaningful conclusion. We would also like to extend our gratitude towards the panelists Dr. Nesar Ahmed and Dr. P.K. Sahoo for presenting the State Budget Scenario for Rajasthan and Odisha and to Dr. Kiran Bhatty for sharing her concerns towards education sector in the changing budgetary scenario.

Finally, we thank the entire HAQ team – Kumar Shailabh, who coordinated the organisation of the Consultation and prepared this report, Farhana Yasmin, for her support in organising, Ankita Gupta, Devesh Agnihotri and Shahbaz Khan Sherwani who took copious notes of the deliberations, Preeti Singh for handling accounts, logistics and overall supervision, Aditya Kumar for providing technical support and Tarcitius Baa to be available at odd hours to handle important tasks that required running around. Our interns, Ms. Sauda Shafiq and Mr. Timo Feihn who took down minutes of meeting during the consultation.

Enakshi Ganguly Thukral
Co-Director

Bharti Ali
Co-Director

Chapter 1
Context & Purpose of the Consultation

The child rights community was shocked to see sudden and drastic cuts in budgets for children in the national budget, 2015-16. We were told that the Central Government was implementing the recommendations of the Fourteenth Finance Commission and that now in the spirit of ***"cooperative federalism"***, the principal responsibility of implementing programmes aimed at improving the condition of the children was being transferred to the States, as social sector issues are included in the State List. The Finance Commission recommended that share of the states in the divisible pool of taxes should be increased to 42% from 32%. The argument that is therefore being made is that states are being given the fiscal autonomy that would enable them to design social sector schemes according to their state-specific needs.

As a result of this decision, the central government has heavily cut down its expenditure on various social security schemes, particularly those affecting children, since the Centre does not have the necessary financial resources. Importantly, programmes aimed at improving the condition of the children would continue to suffer as long as the States do not get in place their programmes. Ironically, social sector programmes are faced with an uncertain future despite the stated commitment of the Finance Minister, Mr. Arun Jaitley, towards welfare of the "*poor* and the *disadvantaged*".

Budget Cuts in Key Social Sector Ministries	
Ministry	**Percentage Fall in Allocation (between 20014-15 and 2015-16)**
Ministry of Human Resource Development	-17%
Ministry of Women and Child Development	-51%
Ministry of Family and Health Welfare	-13%

How will this affect Children's Budget?

In 2008, Statement 22 was introduced in the Budget listing out the schemes and programmes for children. This was recognition of Budget for Children. However, despite this recognition there has been a downward trend in the share for children-centered programmes in the national budget over the past few years. The GOI has admitted that it has never crossed the 5% of the total budgetary expenditure. What is more, the allocated funds have not been spent. Analysis of state budgets also shows similar trends. Many states had returned the share of central allocations as they could not raise the matching resources needed to implement the programmes.

The share of children-centered programmes, which was a little over 3 per cent of the total budget in 2015-16, has seen 29% cut in 2015-16. All flagship programmes of the government like Sarva Siksha Abhiyan , Mid-day Meal Scheme, Integrated Child Development Services, and health related schemes, as well as allocations to the key ministries that implement them, stand severely cut (See table below).

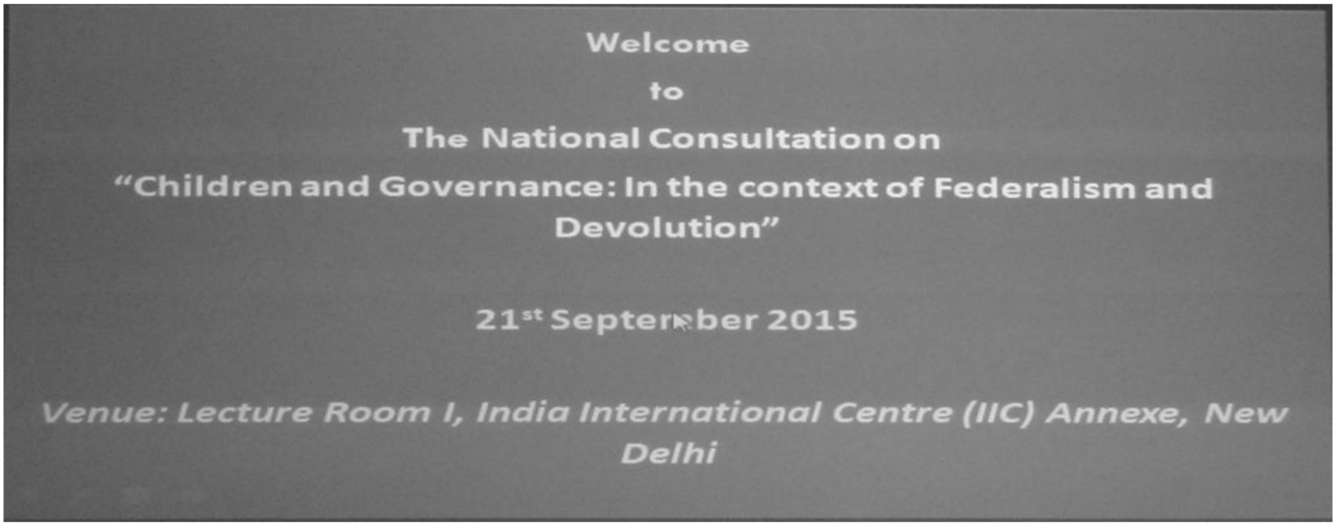
Scheme	Percentage Fall in Allocation (between 20014-15 & 2015-16)
Sarva Shiksha Abhiyaan	-20.74
Mid- day meal Scheme	-30.11
Rashtriya Madhayamik Shiksha Abhiyaan	-28.70
Scheme for Setting up of 6000 model School at Block Level As bench mark of Excellence	-99.92
Support to Education including teacher training	-36.55
Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS)	-54.19
Deendayal Disabled Rehabilitation Scheme	-33.33
Manufacture of Sera Vaccine	-18.03
NRHM-RCH Flexible Pool	-21.63
National Programme for Youth and Development	-28.75
Scheme for prevention of Alcoholism and substance(drug) abuse	-66.81

The key questions that arise in this context is the following: How will states address the needs and rights of children? Would the existing institutional structures in the states be able to respond to this changed scenario? What would be the impact of this altered focus of spending on the children-centered programmes on the target-groups?

About the Consultation

On one hand, while eminent economists and policy makers have welcomed the idea of bringing "fiscal federalism"; there is a massive protest by some civil society groups against the heavy budget cuts, devolution and its effects. They feel this shift requires to be phased out and that states need to be prepared to take up the challenges of managing and running these programmes efficiently. Further, while there is also a lot of debate on the effect of the Centre's decision on poor and rich states, there is not enough clarity on how it will impact specific groups.

Thus, there was a compelling need to bring more clarity on this new development. It is in this context, a one day national level consultation on this issue was held at India International Centre Annexe on 21st September. In the consultation, HAQ brought on-board economists, experts and various child rights groups across the nation to delve deeper into understanding about the implications of 14th F.C. recommendations on children related programmes and also to share their fears and apprehensions about governance after the new fiscal arrangement between Centre and States.



Areas of discussion

Broadly the consultation revolved around two major issues. In the first half, the consultation focused on:

a) Understanding the national scenario of fiscal allocations for children over the past eight years starting from 2008-09 till 2015-16;
b) Highlighting the glaring gaps in 2015-16 Union Budgets;
c) Concerns shared by various State governments over the new fiscal arrangements;
d) The fiscal impact of the 14th F.C. recommendations on children related programmes;
e) How the State Budgets have unfolded in post-devolution phase.

The second half of the day, the consultation focused on understanding about the situation and concerns from children's perspective at planning and governance level. The key questions which the consultation addressed in second half were:

a) The ideals of governance;
b) The need to understand the challenges ahead;
c) The way forward for the child rights group.

The consultation observed the participation from 9 different States and these State representatives did share the visible effects of 14^{th} Finance Commission in their respective states and also what should be the roadmap to ensure better governance in their States. The first half of the consultation was chaired by Dr. A.K. Shivakumar, a well-known development economist and policy advisor and in the second half, discussions were facilitated by Dr. Bishnu Mohapatra (Professor at Ajim Premji Unioversity) and by Dr. Vandana Prasad (Pediatrician and National Convenor, Public Health Resource Network).

Chapter 2
Understanding the National Scenario of Child Budgeting and the Concerns Ahead

In the current scenario, while there is an evident instance of lack of interest of the government in the issues of human rights and specifically child rights, there are also serious issues emerging from the heavy budget cuts for most of the social welfare programmes in the current Union Budget. On one hand, the government has been saying that the money is not the problem and the real problem lies in money allocated, not being spent too well. There is an undeniable need to check the gaps in the process of implementation, but at the same time, the argument of "adequacy and sufficiency of funds" cannot be ignored. In the light of such glaring issues, it is quintessential to first understand the landscape of child budgeting in India and identifying the gaps emerging from the current budget.

"Putting the equity lens and see how the slashing of budget really affects the poor and disadvantaged group, then the problem emerges to be of very serious nature."
Dr. A.K. Shivakumar

Child Budgeting in India: The National Landscape

India is one of few countries in the world in which the government has recognised the need for 'child budgeting' and this has been included in the official documents- most importantly as part of the Expenditure Budget presented with the finance bill every year. This is an important recognition of citizenship of children and the role of the government in realising their rights.

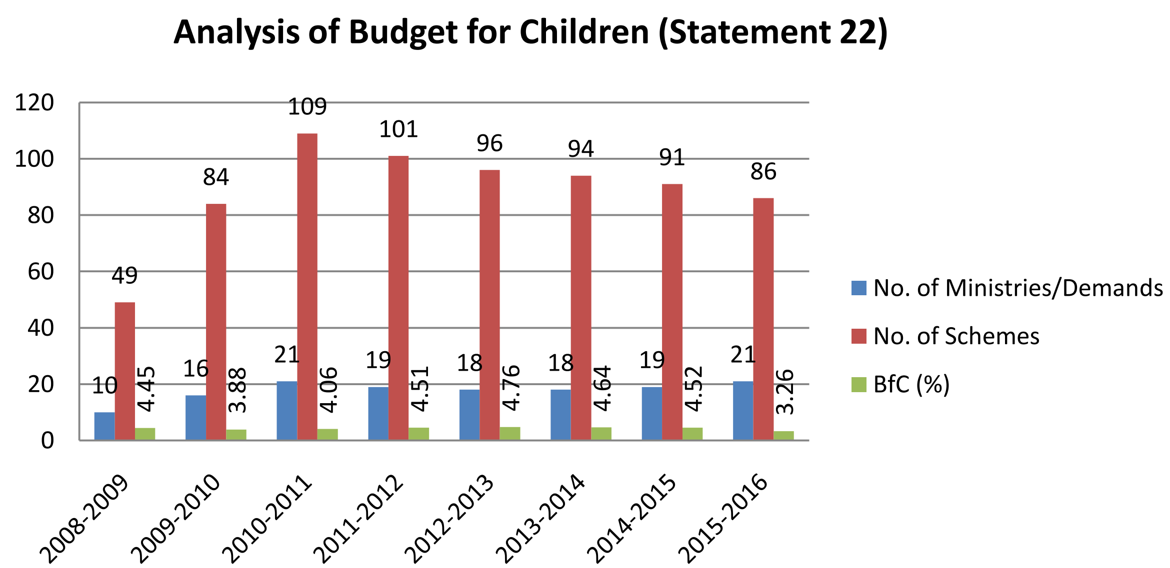
The child budget or Budget for Children, as a separate document, was first introduced by the Government in the year 2008-09 as "***Statement 22- Budget Provisions for Schemes for the Welfare of Children"*** in the Expenditure Budget Volume 1. This document contains all the programmes/schemes related exclusively for children being floated by various

Ministries/departments in a particular financial year. This separate statement listing out the government's financial commitments is very helpful. This becomes even more important in the light of the move towards fiscal devolution based on the 14th Finance Commission Recommendations.

The Ministry of Women and Child Development has recognised the importance of the inclusion of Statement 22 in its Annual Report 2014-15[1]:

> *In 2008-09, when the 'Child Budgeting' statement was introduced in the Union Budget, the 'Demands for Grants' with child specific schemes included those of the Ministries of Women an Child Development, Human Resource Development, Health and Family Welfare, Labour and Employment, Social Justice and Empowerment, Tribal Affairs, Minority Affairs and Youth Affairs and Sports. The 'Child Budgeting' statement now covers 18 'Demands for Grants'(including Union Ministries/Departments of Atomic Energy, Industrial Policy and Promotion, Posts, Telecommunication and Information and Broadcasting among others), marking a significant increase from an initial eight 'Demands for Grants' in 2008-09.*

In the 2015 -16 budget, the number of ministries increased further to include twenty two. Figure 1 shows the evolution of Statement 22 since it was introduced in 2008-09. The systematic increase in the number of ministries and departments that are included in the Statement 22 can be seen as a growing recognition of the need for investing in children and its mainstreaming into all departments and ministries of the government. However, equally important is to analyse what the budgets are being year-marked for and whether it is amounting to real investment or mere tokenism.



[1] Page 53; Annual Report 2014-15; http://wcd.nic.in/publication/wcdar2014/chapter%204.pdf . Accessed October 1, 2015.

Since 2008-09, the share of children in the total Union Budget has never gone beyond 5 per cent despite the number of programmes increasing every year. According to the government's own admission *many of the outcome indicators for children point to the disadvantaged status of children, the proportion of Child Budget in the Union Budget seems inadequate*[2].

Further, this concern has been resonated by the concluding observations made by the UNCRC on 13 June 2014, based on India's report presented to the Committee on 3 June 2014 in Geneva. *"The budgetary allocations do not adequately take into consideration child protection needs. There is also mis-management of allocated resources, a problem which is exacerbated by a high level of corruption and the lack of effective monitoring and evaluation systems"* says the Committee in its observation[3]. Despite of showing the progressive attitude towards children, Union Budget 2015-16 has shown heavy slashes in some of the flagship programmes, resulting into regressive allocations.

Further, the Statement 22 clearly explains that the reduced allocations in 2015-16 Union Budget is on account of the 14th Finance Commission recommendations, which lays down for the enhanced devolution of central taxes to states. However, the document also mentions that now, the States will have to put in more money to compensate the shortfall for these programmes. However, some of the States have expressed a sense of ambiguity around the new fiscal development as the fund sharing patterns have remained the same and the planning process in the States have not appropriated themselves around these developments.

[2] India: Third and Fourth Combined Periodic Report on the Convention on the Rights of the Child http://wcd.nic.in/crc3n4/crc3n4_1r.pdf

[3] Full document available on http://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/treatybodyexternal/SessionDetails1.aspx?SessionID=843&Lang=en

Chapter 3
Implications of the 14th Finance Commission Recommendations and Restructuring of the Union Budget

The 14th Finance Commission Recommendations have been observed to have conflict between two objectives. The **First objective is strengthening the fiscal federalism in the country**. There is a lack of discussions on decentralization from State to local bodies, but more on decentralization from Central to State. Many policy analysts, experts as well as Centre for Budget and Governance Accountability (CBGA) have asked for a greater autonomy of the State Government and for the greater autonomy of the State Budget. The reason for this discussion is that the State has not been able to take care of a number of things, including staff shortages across sectors and the lack of recruitment policy required by them.

The **Second objective** is **to ensure adequate budgetary resources for important sectors**. With respect to children, most of the child focused public investments are located in the social sectors which includes education, health, nutrition, protection programmes etc. It is well known that the social sector is under-funded for decades now, thus, prompting us to advocate for higher allocation for the social sector. When we advocate for the higher allocation for the social sector, we refer to the combined allocation in the Union and State Budget.

"It is essential to recognize the change in the discourse of the major concerns and if something has been imposed in consequence of such changes"
Subrat Das

In the present scenario, the second objective seems to have been neglected or is lacking the deserved attention. The question that can be raised here is whether the two objectives can be taken together? Technically, the two objectives should go together. There should be high allocations for social sectors and high allocations for child related programmes coming from the State budgets. **However, there is a problem with the overall fiscal regime in the country, i.e. It is a low tax regime.** In terms of the global fiscal policy space that the government has in our country, it is constrained. The center does not have much to share with the States in terms of its share of taxes. Hence, when such kinds of devolutions are taking place, they give rise to the problem of aggravating regional disparities.

The overall budget allocation in our country is not adequate. In terms of government spending on education, India's performance is worst than not only developed countries, but also developing countries. China and Brazil, two of the BRICS Countries, have in fact stepped up in government spending in education in the 2000s. In terms of health, as well, India does very poorly in overall government spending on Health in proportion to the gross domestic product. Even in the health sector, some of the other BRICS countries have stepped up in the overall magnitude of public investment.

This used to be the main focus of discussions until a few years ago. Now, the focus has shifted to protecting whatever little the States had been spending on the social sector. **It is essential to recognize the change in the discourse of the major concerns and if something has been imposed in consequence of such changes,** instead of discussing how and to what extent the overall investments in social sectors can be stepped up.

In India the **TAX-GDP ratio has been less than 17%,** which contributes to the overall level of government spending. In comparison with India, the TAX-GDP ratio is higher in the BRICS countries and is significantly higher in the OECD Countries. When we look at how optimistic the policy makers are at the National level in India, it is observed that **out of the total 17% of GDP almost 2/3rd is collected by the Central Government by way of Central Taxes**. For higher devolution of funds for State, we look at Gross Central Taxes**. Out of the Gross Central Taxes** 7-8% is set aside and **93-92% is the divisible pool of Central Taxes**. **Out of this divisible pool**, until 2014-2015, 32% was being devolved to all the States in total and **at present, 42% will be devolved to States**. This 42%, i.e. 10.3% of GDP 2015-2016, devolution is not quite adequate. Also, the projectile increase for the next to financial years is not very encouraging. The Gross Central Taxes to GDP Ratio is around 15-16% of GDP. In this regard, the 42% should have been an adequate amount and the problems faced by the States should have ceased to exist.

With respect to Centre-State sharing of resources, for the State budget, besides their own tax revenue and non-tax revenue, the States depend on **Transfers from the Centre and on Borrowing**. **(a) Transfers from Center –** The Finance Commission has increased the share of divisible pool of Central Taxes, as untied funds (as desired by the states). However, these much required untied funds were not desired by the States at the cost of decrease in the planned funds. The overall assistance of Centre in planned spending by States, as recommended by the Planning Commission, has been reduced for a number of Central Schemes. **(b) Borrowing –** The 14th Finance Commission has been more restrictive in the borrowing limits of the States. Therefore, the size of State Budget depends largely upon the overall **TAX-GDP** Ratio of the Country. The taxation policies of the Centre are going to determine the overall public spending in the Country. **The states do not have much scope for collecting tax revenues**.

With respect to Finance Commission Grants, till the 13th Finance Commission, only non-planned expenditure by States and sector specific/purpose specific grants were focused upon. **In the 14th Finance Commission the distinction between Planned and Unplanned funds has been dissolved and the sector specific grants have also been removed.** The 14th Finance Commission is more inclined towards giving the State governments the autonomy to disperse the funds as required by them. Same goes for the devolution of funds to the local bodies.

On comparing the total State share in budget for the term 2014-2015 and 2015-2016, the States are seen to be gaining in terms of their share in Central Taxes and in the total finance commission grants.

On an average in 2015-2016, the States are getting a budget of Rs. 1 lac Crores. It is observed that in terms of the magnitude of the resources, most Sates have received a generous amount. (Sates like Bihar and Karnataka claim to have received less). However, if we calculate the overall increase in the State Budget after 14th F.C. Recommendations, the increase in not very significant and has on an average observed 2000 to 5000 Crore increase. Revised budgets are not reliable in assessing the true increase or decrease in the budget allocation and such comparison tends to present much favorable picture for the government.

In 2015-2016, the Ministry of Finance granted a large share of untied funds, but, at the same time, slashed the funds from the domain of planned spending, thus, imposing the expenditure cuts on the social sector schemes. ***At this point, the 14th Finance Commission should have intervened in determining on what basis the allocation of the Union budget has been re-prioritized.***

Union Budget –

1. SSA & Mid-day meals – 22-30% ↓
2. Health Sector –
    - Department of health and sanitary welfare - 6000 crores ↓
    - Drinking water and sanitation programme – Major cuts ↓
3. ICDS – 9600 crores ↓
4. Ministry of Women and Child Development – Most severe ↓

Supplementary Grant of Union Budget for 2015 - 2016 –

1. ICPS – 3600 crores ↑
2. SABLA – 400 crores
3. Swachh Bharat Abhiyan – 2500 crores ↑
4. Drinking water programme – 1200 crores ↑

Even though the allocations were increased in the Supplementary Grant, the allocations for ICDS, Swachh Bharat Abhiyan and Drinking water Programme are lesser than in 2014-2015. Justification given by the Union Ministry of Finance is that the States now have untied funds to compensate for the budget cuts. This is possible, if the States instead of focusing on an increase in the overall budget spending in the social sector focus more on the proper allocation of the existing budget to the entire social sector, by prioritizing. This has already been done States like Karnataka, Tamil Nadu and Himachal Pradesh, where higher allocation has been given to the social sector. The poorer states such as Jharkhand, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh and Odisha have faced a deficit in the public investments; hence, they have not been able to give higher allocation the social sector.

There has been a contradiction in the directions given by the Finance Commission and the Ministry of Finance. While, the Finance Commission gives the States the autonomy to design their own expenditure, the Ministry of Finance has directed that States are to ensure that in the social sector the prevailing level of allocations are maintained because the States have been given untied funds. **The States are opposing to this increase in the untied funds at the cost of reduced budget in the Central Programmes.** In the poorer states, the overall expenditure shortfall will be more acute, because budget cuts will have to be made in all sectors. The priority to social sector has been reduced in Bihar by 40-45%; In Rajasthan by 40-41%; Similar in Maharashtra and Karnataka.

Supplementary Budget in Bihar, Kerala, Chhattisgarh and Madhya Pradesh:

States	Total State Budget (Rs. Crore)	% of Social Sector in Total State Budget	% of Social welfare/Women & Child Dept. in Total State Budget
Kerala	816 Crore	30%	5%
Chhattisgarh	14,000 Crore	7%	Less than 0.5%
Madhya Pradesh	8600 Crore	6.5%	Less than 1%
Bihar	17,000 Crore	17.5%	3.5%

Conclusion

The States can retain what was being allocated earlier to the social sector, but cannot increase the spending significantly. However, many have voiced their concern that whether the States can even retain the allocated budget, due to competition for resources is going to be very inconsistent and specially in the poorer States.

Chapter 4
Getting the States' Perspective on Fiscal Devolution

Rajasthan

One of the most significant impact of the in the 14^{th} Finance Commission recommendation could be seen as enhanced allocation for Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) and Urban Local Bodies (ULBs). As a result of this new arrangement, PRIs and the ULBs are going to receive around Rs. 57,000 crores per year in the country. Rajasthan has received Rs. 750 crores as first installment from the centre under the Fourteenth Finance Commission recommended grant.

Prior to 2014-15, the State budget books never revealed the share of Union Expenditure in the Centrally Sponsored Scheme (CSS), but in 2014-15, it was changed and now the share of union expenditure for CSS is mentioned separately.

In 2014-2015, the total revenue of the state has a decline from Rs. 100,000 Crore (BE) to Rs. 96,000 Crore (RE) and the reason for such decline is major deduction in the share of Central taxes (from Rs. 22,000 Crore in 2014-2015 (BE) to Rs. 19,000 Crore in 2014-15 (RE)).

"States' eagerness to bring in PPP model into social security programmes could be one of the major impacts of the 14^{th} F.C. Recommendations"

Dr. Nesar Ahmed

After the devolution of central taxes, this year Rajasthan is going to get an extra of Rs. 6000 Crore more than compared to previous year, but if we look at the Grant-in-Aid from Centre, the State would receive Rs. 8000 Crore less than previous year (Rs. 27000 Crore in 2014-15 to Rs. 19000 Crore in 2015-16). Because of these reductions, the total transfer from Centre to State has gone down from Rs. 52000 Crore in 2014-15 (BE) to Rs. 51000 Crore in 2015-16 (BE). In light on these reductions, the State of Rajasthan is not a net gainer, but at a loss after the 14^{th} F. C. Recommendations. On the expenditure side, there is no increase at all in State Plan Budget in 2015-16 compared to the previous year.

Budget for Children in Rajasthan

In 2015-16 Rajasthan Budget for children (BfC), about 80 to 90 per cent of BfC allocation has been made towards education sector and on the flipside, there is a decline in allocation for child protection (from Rs. 163 Crore in 2014-15 to Rs. 111 Crore in 2015-16) and nutrition (including MDM). The total allocation for child health (including the budget for Department of health & Family Welfare) in the state has observed to be around 20 per cent of the total state budget this year. Although, there are few CSS like Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA), National Rural Health Mission (NRHM), the State government has tried to retain the previous allocation; however, few of the flagship schemes like Mid-Day Meal (MDM), Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan (RMSA) and Integrated Child Development Scheme (ICDS) have seen significant slashing of Budget.

As the government is slashing the expenditure on social services and plan expenditure, it seems to be promoting the *Public Private Partnership (PPP)* model in education (draft policy), health (PHCs being run on PPP) and nutrition (the Angnavadis as Nandghars) sectors. Rajasthan has made the headlines with closure and merger of about 17000 government schools in recent months and this process has been carried out without conducting any survey and ground work. This development can also be seen as State Government's reluctance in spending towards education as they will have a limited fund flowing from Centre to run such schemes. Secondly, now the State finance Department has asked the other Departments to relook at their schemes and decide which are the crucial schemes that should be continued and which can be done away with. This is a clear indication of shrinking of welfare spaces for the marginalized section of the society in the State of Rajasthan.

Odisha

Odisha is one of the richest States in terms of natural resources having the maximum tribal population. Despite such advantages, the State has been underperforming on various Human Development indicators and specially on child development indicators like infant mortality rate, maternal mortality rate, neo-natal mortality rate etc. etc.

One of the major arguments evolving after the implementation of 14^{th} F. C. recommendations is that now the States will be free to decide their own priorities and hence, they would be responsible for running the social security schemes. This clearly means that now the States will have to invest from the revenue they generate clubbed with the 10 per cent of extra share in central taxes. According to Mr. P.K. Sahoo, as Odisha is a naturally rich State, mining is one of the most thriving sources of the State revenue and since now mining has been stopped, the State will be on the backseat to generate its revenue.

In the current budget, impact of 14th FC Recommendations cannot be measured aptly as the State budget was presented much before the Union Budget. Eventhough, the Budget for Children has seen a dip in the 2015-16 Odisha Budget.

Assam

The fiscal devolution to the States has been increased as per recommendations of 14th Finance Commission. However, it is also seen that there is reduction in the current budget in central share for a host of programmes including National Health Mission (NHM), Rashtriya madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan (RMSA) and Integrated Child Development Scheme (ICDS). There would not be much room for the States to implement their own schemes without a major disruption due to sudden cessation of many ongoing developmental programmes. Consequently the States would hardly have any scope to use the own resources for the State Specific schemes[4].

Mr. Melvil Pereira expressed his concerns by quoting the news report published in the local newspaper, wherein it was mentioned that for the year 2014-15, a total of Rs. 18000 Crore was sanctioned as Plan Budget for Assam, out of which, only Rs. 12462 Crore were released. Further, out of the released amount, only Rs. 8000 Crore were given to various departments and the rest of the amount is to be returned. This indicates towards a sense of ambiguity regarding the utilisation of funds in the State. Apart from these ambiguities, there have been major slashes in the Centrally Sponsored Schemes; however, the State schemes have seen no changes in 2015-16 Budget. Additionally, given the geographical and ethnic diversity of the State, such budget cuts do not favor the agenda of holistic development.

West Bengal

Although the 14th Finance Commission has increased the devolution of resources to the States to 42%, which is laudable, but the demand of the State for debt relief has completely been ignored. The State Officials are of the view that the loss in these schemes will not be offset by 10% hike in overall funds. Central support in critical schemes such as Mid-Day Meal (MDM) been slashed by 66%. For the Universal Education Scheme, central support has been reduced by 77%. State finance officials estimate the net loss at Rs. 2000 Crore when compared with the gain in revenue shares[5].

As per Mr. Kallol Chakraborthy, although the Chief Minister Ms. Mamta Banerjee, has been voicing against the deducted finances but there has been no strong statement given about how the programmes will be implemented in the changed scenario.

---

[4] Excerpts from the Budget Speech of Assam Budget 2015-16
[5] "When More is Less"; Sunday Times of India; July 5 2015

Tamil Nadu

Tamil Nadu has been demanding for fiscal federalism and as one of the results of 14th Finance Commission recommendations, Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) are now going to be the most benefitted. But, as the power lies mostly with the District administration and lower level bureaucracy, the fear is that this would result into the mockery of new benefits. The other negative impacts could be that after such heavy budget cuts, the children specific programmes would continue to suffer.

According to Mr. Jim Jessudas, the problem is deep-routed as there is a complete lack of basic understanding of "child" as most of the schemes meant for children are limited mostly for children upto the age of 14 years. Secondly, there is no time- bound plan in most of the children related programmes and often, the age specific needs are ignored. This situation will only get worse in the post devolution phase as the States would have a very limited scope of prioritization of agenda.

Manipur

In a situation of conflict, prioritization becomes difficult and often, children related issues take a backseat. In Manipur State budget, the budget for police department has surpassed the allocations for social sector allocations by a huge margin. According Mr. Pradipkumar, a child rights activist from Manipur, at present, at present, there are around 80000 security personals deployed in the State for security reasons. For every 30 people in the State, there is one security personal. In such scenario, issue of public security largely remains the focus of the State and other issues do not move up in the ladder of priority areas for the State government and children related issues are one of the worst hit.

This also means that the State is heavily dependent on Centre for the welfare of children. Fiscal devolution without any roadmap would only deteriorate the situation rather than improving it. What is more, in the post devolution phase, the key programme like SABLA which focuses on adolescent girls, has been stopped completely. The compensation scheme for the rape victims has been reduced from Rs. 70000 to Rs. 25000 now. One of the biggest worries Manipur state has been struggling with is that what will be the shape of welfare schemes if the "Special Status" of the State will be taken away by the government.

Gujarat

Ms. Archana Srivastava from SAHAJ (a Vadodara based NGO) feels that after the much hyped Gujarat model during 16th Lok Sabha Election campaigns, now Gujarat is suffering from ***"we are the best"*** syndrome. The realities on the ground pose a different picture. Gujarat is one of the

States where malnutrition among early childhood is prevalent, but the State has done a lot of work fighting malnutrition only by way of spending huge amounts on advertisements and putting up hoardings. Being the home State of Prime Minister Modi, the State has not voiced any concerns regarding the implications of 14th F.C. recommendations. But the fact is that the cuts in centrally sponsored schemes are only going to harm the implementation on the ground, especially when the State government is only interested in advertising.

Telangana

According to Ms. Sumitra Makapatty, member of Telangana State Commission for Protection of Child Rights, as the youngest state of the country, Telangana State has kept its priorities in a different way. Industrialisation, smart cities, tech parks, developing the capital city etc. etc. have taken the whole discourse of development in the State and in such scenario, social security and particularly children related programmes remain unaddressed. The accountability mechanisms are not yet in place and children are not is the centre stage of development agenda. In this scenario, if the centre government pulls away its hand in ensuring the rights of children, then these issues will remain at the back of margins.

Observations made by the Participants

One of the major concerns raised by the participants was that as it is share of children in the total Union Budget is very less, so in this situation and in current fiscal and political scenario, would it be possible to earmark a specific budget for children? While dealing with this query, Mr. Subrat Das expressed his opinion that earmarking of specific budget for children does not seem to be possible in the present scenario. The plan strategies like Special Component Plan for SCs and Tribal Area Sub Plan which have been existing in the current system, even their future seems pretty vague as the 14th F.C. Recommendations have done away with the categorization of Plan and Non-plan Expenditures. Also with the end of Planning Commission, there would not be any plan document after 12th Five Year Plan. So there are high chances that from 2017-18 onwards, there would not be any distinction as Plan and Non-Plan Budget. In addition to these developments, recently the Jharkhand Government merged the State Planning Department with the State Finance Department and now it is called State Planning and Finance Department. Same kind of instances of merging of the planning department has also happened in Rajasthan. Generally, ministries are very reluctant in earmarking a particular budget for a particular section of the society and the States follow the same kind of pattern.

Chapter 5
Child Education: Path Ahead in Post Devolution Phase

Before the debate starts on the "good, bad & ugly" pictures of the Fiscal Devolution to the States, it is quintessential to understand the allocations which have been made towards child education in past few years. The Millennium development Goals are coming to an end this year and India is far behind achieving the MDGs. What is more, India has not been able to spend 6 per cent of its GDP on education and with this pace, India will keep lagging behind in achieving the global goals towards education. Thus, it is necessary to continue the struggle for more allocation towards child education.

The stage we are at in terms of our social sector achievement, its not maintenance which we are looking for. We must be able to increase the allocations in whatever manner we can.

Kiran Bhatty

Right to Free and Compulsory Education is a constitutionally guaranteed fundamental right and the obligation lies with the State. After the 14th F.C. Recommendation, Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA), one of the flagship schemes to administer the RTE Act, saw a major cut and all this happened in the name of fiscal federalism. In this situation, the question arises that with who does the obligation to guarantee free and compulsory education lie? Whether it is the State Government or the Central Government? Education comes in the concurrent list of the Constitution and thus, both the Central and State governments have the responsibility to full-fill this right.

After the enactment of RTE Act, all the States increased their education budget significantly and further recognising the norms and standards and timelines, the central assistance to SSA to all the States was also increased by 65%. In last five years after the RTE Act was enacted, the States and Centre jointly worked towards improving the situation of child education. Although, this effort has translated into fruitful results, but we are yet far away from reaching the global targets. At this stage, if the Central assistance to States for education related programmes is reduced (as per the 14th F.C. Recommendations), there will be a negative impact on child education. As one of the implications of the 14th F.C. Recommendations, if not more, at least

States should be able to maintain the level at which they are at present. But, this would only lead towards underachieving the goals.

Union as well as State governments are increasingly moving towards the privatization of social security programmes through bringing in the PPP model. We have had instances of such encroachment in Rajasthan, Telangana, Andhra Pradesh, and Tamil Nadu for school education. The burning questions of the meaning of PPP in school education must be highlighted and as the systems exist today with no proper monitoring and accountability system, how would the government ensure quality, accessibility and affordability of education? Secondly, by bringing the whole private sector into education system, the agenda of SKILLING is being promoted and gradually, in the light of proposed new education policy, gradually the education sector will move towards the agenda of meeting the needs industries. In this whole paradigm shift, fiscal devolution might have a role to play.

As mentioned earlier, fiscal devolution is good in principle and we all have been demanding to see such decentralization, but it will be meaningful to not to limit this just to the fiscal decentralization, and should go beyond it. Devolution of decision-making power, devolution of human resources should also be carried out simultaneously.

Conclusion of Part I

Summing up the discussions, Dr. Shiv Kumar highlighted the following challenges that need to be addressed in the context of the fiscal federalism and devolution:

Analytical Challenge:

In principle, we should welcome the whole process of decentralization and devolution of funds and the greater fiscal autonomy given to the States, but the way this process has been conducted brings lot of confusion is bothersome. Looking at the budget figures of the Union Budget this year and of the figures of the few State Budgets, they strongly depict lack of clarity and by identifying the heavy budget cuts for specific programmes, now the next step is to delve deeper into it by analysing the budgets for line items and where the major slashes have been done. This analysis must be linked with the impacts of such budgetary slashes.

Engagement Challenge:

If the Central Government is of the opinion that after devolution, all the money is going to the States and the States need to incest into social security programmes from their end and on the other hand, States are showing a kind of confusion and discomfort, then the biggest question before the civil society is that whom should we engage with? In such scenario, it is equally important to not to ignore the private parties but the strong monitoring and accountability systems must be developed.

Political Challenge:

Whenever the question of adequacy of funds and effective implementation of schemes are raised by the civil society, there is always a blame game played between the Centre and States. But, ultimately the argument of allocations for children and social sector, adequacy and sufficiency of funds are inherently political in nature. Amidst all these, now there is a sudden trend of making announcement of schemes without announcing the financial backings. Such trend goes completely against the right-based approach and there is a strong need to have a large scale right based public discourse rather than having a one-on-one discussion with the departments. In the current political scenario, where there is close surveillance on NGOs and their functioning, one also needs to be strategic in framing their arguments

Chapter 6
Child Rights & Governance in the Context of Devolution

Opening the discussion on federalism and role and capacities of the states, Dr. Bishnu Mohapatra said that "numbers" in the budgets play a very crucial role in the politics. These "numbers" only make sense when one can understand the politics behind of arriving at them.

The numbers give us the broad picture and enable one to read the intent of the State. Thus, one must be able to read the budgets as these documents are the "Idioms of State transaction"

Dr. Bishnu Mohapatra

At the same time, although decentrealisation is spoken about, there is a huge centralising tendency in Indian politics at both the Centre and State level. Hence the federal discourse is trapped in the dyadic discourse. Hence, even as states demand more decentralization and feudalism, they themselves have centralising tendencies as they restrict the power at the State administration and do not let it percolate down to Panchayats and local levels of governance.

In the post independence era, Indian politics has focused largely on the states rather than centre precisely speaking there has been no national politics and if we look at the contemporary elections especially after the coming of regional state parties, different states have presented different political equations and balances. Eventually, the national politics heavily depends on the State politics and according to the State election cycle, the agenda of discussion also changes.

There is a deeper paradox evolving in the language of Indian politics in the last two decades. On one hand, people have different connotations that why neo-liberal India is interested in creating hospitable conditions for foreign capital by liberalizing its own rules for industrial investment and on the other hand, why is it that the State has to adopt so many social legislations, rights based legislations in the last 10-15 years. In the post Second World War era, much of the social legislations were recognized by the states having rich in resources and wanted to spend on things like health, education, environments, unemployment and certain basic rights at that time. But, as those States grew more neo-liberal, there was lot of attack on these social rights.

In India, even after opening its gates for world market and becoming more neo-liberal in its economic policies, the country went on adopting many right based social legislations like right to education, right to employment, right to food etc. This in fact, creates a kind of paradox and confusion as on one hand the State wants to adopt neo-liberal policies and on the other hand, it is also trying to protect the social rights of the citizens.

There must be the clarity on the role of the State. By way of enacting the social and right based legislations and at the same time, by adopting to the neo-liberal economic policies, we have seen the that State is opening its markets for private parties and through PPP model into social sector, it is reducing the citizens into clients and further, reducing the allocations for most of these social legislations. Thus, it becomes important to understand the dominant tendencies, which also has a global language.

We see the allocations are going down, but they are going down in a specific manner. We need to identify that pattern.

Dr. Vandana Prasad

This is a very complex situation and strong arguments of *"no one size fits all"* need to be put forward. India is the land of much diversity with 36 States and 640 districts and every state and district will have its own demands on the basis of its geographical locations, ethnicity, culture and population. What we need is an analytical framework, which must include the analysis of polity, the analysis of power, the analysis of relationship between the State and its citizens.

What is the role of the state [in the context of decentralization with a squeeze on budgets, and simultaneous privatization], and this leads us to the conceptual question *"Should the State not be Welfarist or Paternalist in nature?"* Looking it at from equity lens, when there is a peculiar kind of vulnerability and enormous range of differences, then can the State afford to be not paternalistic or welfarist? So it's a very paradoxical situation that we welcome decentralization but it comes with a context in which it goes against the rights of the most vulnerable, and even paternalism appears a better bargain.

In the current context, not only the government investments towards social sector are going down, but they are going down in a particular manner which is designed to open the gates for the private sector. For example, in the current regime, while health budgets are down on the whole, a lot of emphasis is being given to investments in insurance cover. Eventually, the government is not investing in strengthening the existing systems, but is giving money to private sector to invest in service delivery. We see the same scenario, for example, in strategies that promote profit-making products, such as nutraceuticals as compared to investments in community-based decentralized processes.

In this backdrop, the civil society must develop a more sophisticated logic and rationality keeping in mind that there cannot be just one rationality for all the States and methods of arguments must be adapted as per the context. Child rights anyway feature at the bottom of State priorities and would remain at the bottom unless there is a pressure which is backed by nuanced arguments. Using mobilisational platforms of the current era such as consumer fora also needs to be considered, given the fact that they have played a significant role in keeping the private sector in check when the state fails to do so.

Conclusion

In order to understand the new fiscal arrangement between the Centre and State, one needs to delve deeper into few serious questions, which are:

a) Has the fiscal devolution actually happened?

In absolute quantum, it has not happened and for the social sector, definitely it does not seem to have happened and we have to continue to argue that. If the State (Union Government) is not giving money to the social sector and it thinks that fairly impoverished state governments (some of the States are absolutely bankrupt; like Rajasthan does not have money to pay salaries) then what is the central government's money for and how is it being used? We must track not only what the government is *not* spending on, but also what the Union Government *is* doing with its money. It is certainly making investment in the social sector but in a way that drives privatization and profit making, so we have to look what actually the government is doing.

b) Devolution without any National Policy?

In the context of health and nutrition, we do not have a law and also we don't have a national policy. So what does the devolution mean in the absence of a national policy? It means a *laissez faire* as the national policy is treated irrelevant and the current government is not creating any national policy anymore. For example, regarding the issues of nutrition, there is no policy where the centre is going to spell out whether the government will go through the decentralized community managed process for malnutrition or the government agencies will buy the nutraceuticals from private agencies for distribution? When will the policies be made about all of this? The State is moving away from this and saying this is not our job and is saying that we are offering a *basket of choice* and the State Governments will decide. Thus, they are completely relinquishing the space of national policy in a way to privatize for profit making. Hence, pushing for national policies and national legislations should be our concern and focus because a certain degree of centralism and uniformity is required. This way, we get neither the contextual flexibility that we need, nor the policy direction that can protect the relatively powerless.

c) Devolution without space for ownership, decision-making, flexibility in programmes and schemes?

As said earlier, the State both relinquishes its role in regulation and simultaneously does not allow for flexibility. For example, ICDS is hugely inflexible and there is no role of even the community to decide about the choice of food being served to their children. The ownership of the community is also denied in such programmes and community participation is completely missing in ICDS. So, programmes like NRHM, ICDS all are completely centralized and deny the community's participation.

d) Devolution without sensitivities and capacities?

There is absolutely no space for ownership, decision making and flexibility in the social security programmes, which we have to keep demanding for. But, even if such spaces do exist on the ground they would not be used well for children for the lack of sensitivities and capacities. Child rights will remain at the bottom of the priority unless there is a process of creating capacities all the way to the village. We must examine the child budget for heads that allow for this kind of sensitivity and capacities to be built, and at these levels the role of civil society should be enhanced in order to build the capacities and sensitivities on the grounds.

e) Devolution without people's pressure?

People's pressure is built on the back of the capacities that have not been sufficiently developed so far. But, in the absence of people's pressure, especially in the situation of accelerated capitalism where poor people are highly expendable, consumer rights need to be brought into play specially by the middle class, and the need to engage on consumer fora, consumer litigation, consumer rights is increasingly becoming quintessential.

Today we cannot talk about protecting the citizenship rights without speaking about the role of the State, role of the society; meaning of good life and what limits can be put on profit. These are the much bigger questions one cannot get away from. It is in this context that reading the numbers, precisely budgets, plays a vital role because the budgets are the “Idioms of State transaction” and enable one to read the language of the State.

Chapter 7
The Way Forward

While the whole day was invested into building the understanding over fiscal federalism and the challenges ahead, some of the child right group did agree on taking this understanding further in their respective State. All the State representatives equivocally expressed and congratulated HAQ for organizing this consultation and voiced their concern over recent budget cuts and the apprehensions of implementation of child rights programmes. The key interventions decided by the participants are:

Odisha: the partners from Odisha will focus on building a campaign on State's role with at least 10 districts in Odisha in the right based manner and will monitor whether the implementation of children related programmes are going in the right direction or not.

Another partner from Odisha will be organizing larger events bringing together child rights organizations, authorities, to create capacities and take it to higher level with the help of media advocacy and what would be the shape of child budget and to discuss how the government departments like planning, finance to bring together and make the voices stronger.

Manipur: What would be the duty of the State and to share as a campaign to give more space for more budgetary allocation and to work more with the community based organization. Nation-wide campaign will be launched to involve other students body and civil society by way of effective use of media advocacy. Involvement of other fraternities would be a better option. Also, for RTE and POCSO, involving village authorities in more democratic way by organizing interface will be an effective strategy.

Telangana: The partner from the State will create budget advocacy material in post devolution phase and build capacity and using media advocacy

National Social Watch: NSW will include an executive chapter on children in their report.

Tamil Nadu: Tamil Nadu State partner emphasized on the need of staying as a group and will keep sharing information. They also expressed their Interest in taking this information to children and young people in the State for creating more awareness. Along with the effective networking, setting up a separate RTI forum exclusively for Child rights is another egnda they are contemplating. Also, while identifying the need to address budgetary issues, partner will plan to organise a State-wise child budget workshop.

Gujarat: Strengthening dialogue with district, block and Panchayat level for budget awareness will be on top in their priority agenda. Another partner from Gujarat agreed on bringing in the element of social accountability through community and to prepare them to demand for their entitlements. Forming groups of children and to build capacities to identify the entitlements under any scheme and these will be later monitored by the members of these communities itself. They will raise the issues of accountability and further will raise these issues with larger networks and use them as evidence. This helps in doing strong advocacy. The same model will be replicated around budgetary issues with communities.

West Bengal: Having done child budget analysis in partnership with HAQ in past, SPAN from Kolkata agreed on tracking the flow of money up to Panchayat from child rights perspective. There is a strong presence of youth forums in most of the districts and these forums would be engaged in analyzing and tracking the budget in their locality. Involving teachers, and other eminent groups to come together and create stronger voices to advocate around the issues of child budget is another strategy they will work out. SPAN would extensively work towards strengthening the village level child protection committees.

Assam: North Eastern Social Centre (NESRC) will organize inter-departmental meetings on budgetary issues and the same can be tried in other three states which are Meghalaya, Tripura and Nagaland.

Karuna Bishnoi: Since Karuna is part of the Drafting Committee of the National Plan of Action for Children, she will focus on putting in the budgetary commitment put in the in National Plan.

Mobile Crèches, Delhi: will continue to advocate for bringing in the legislation for young child and looking at budgets from the bottom to initiate the discourse of having legislation for empowerment of the ECCE systems.

CRY, Delhi: CRY will undertake budget analysis at Uttar Pradesh from child rights perspective. Also, they will monitor how the funds are distributed at Panchayat level and will devise a mechanism for constant monitoring. To monitor the budget cuts in education sector and with so much of drastic cut, what would be quality quotient in current scenario with the given cuts.

Public Health Resource Network (PHRN): PHRN will continue this debate on the basis of evidences collected so far and quantitative and qualitative evidences will be created to advocate more strongly on this issue.

HAQ: HAQ will organize a one day follow up consultation after a year just to check that how things have shaped up in a year’s time and what are the impacts and changes we witness.


Dr. A.K. Shiva Kumar
Economist and Policy Advisor
Mr. Subrat Das
Mr. Prafull Kumar Sahoo
Chairman, Centre for Youth & Social Development
Kiran Bhatty
Centre for Policy Research

Annexure I

AGENDA

National Consultation on "Children and Governance: In the context of Federalism and Devolution"
21st September 2015
Lecture Room I, India International Centre (IIC) Annexe, Lodhi Estate, New Delhi

21st September (Monday)	
9:30 – 10:00	Registration
10:00 – 10:15	Introductory note by **Enakshi Ganguly Thukral**
	Part I: Understanding Fiscal Devolution in the context of Children
10:15– 11:30	**Chaired by - Dr. A.K. Shiva Kumar, Economist and Policy Advisor** ***Kumar Shailabh and Farhana Yasmin- HAQ: Centre for Child Rights, New Delhi-*** Setting the Context: Budget for children and National Scenario ***Subrat Das – Executive Director(CBGA)-*** Implications of the 14th Finance Commission Recommendations and Restructuring of the Union Budget ***State Scenarios from Rajasthan and Odisha*** • *Nesar Ahmed, Budget Analysis Rajasthan Centre (BARC), Jaipur* • *Prafull Kumar Sahoo, Centre for Youth & Social Development (CYSD), Bubaneshwar* ***Any other state representatives that may wish to make a quick intervention may be invited***
11:30 – 11:45	Tea Break
11:45—1.00	Child Education: Path Ahead in Post Devolution Phase ***Kiran Bhatty, Senior Fellow, Centre for Policy Research (CPR), New Delhi*** Summing up of Session I by Dr. A. K. Shivakumar
	Open Discussion- clarifications and Question &Answer
1:00 – 2:00	Lunch Break
	Part II: Child Rights & Governance in the context of Devolution
2:00 – 3:15	**Chaired by Dr. Bishnu Mohapatra, Professor, Azim Premji University** ***Dr.Vandana Prasad, Public Health Resource Network (PHRN)*** Concerns Ahead for Child Health in Post Devolution Phase ***Invite Interventions from the participants*** **Summing Up of Session II by Dr. Bishnu Mohapatra**
3:15 – 3:30	Tea- Break
3:30 – 4.00	Open Discussion and Question & Answer
4:00 - 5:00	Way forward & Vote of Thanks

ANNEXURE II

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

S. No.	Name of the Participant	Organisation
1.	Mr. C. Jim Jesudoss	SAKTHI-VIDIYAL, Madurai
2.	Mr. K. PradipKumar	CRY Fellow, Manipur
3.	Mr. Khirod Routray	Udyog, Odisha
4.	Mr. Soumen Roy	UNICEF, Guwahati
5.	Mr. Falgun Shah	Shaishav, Gujarat
6.	Mr.Mihir Dave	Shaishav, Gujarat
7.	Dr. Nesar Ahmed	Budget Analysis Rajasthan Centre (BARC), Jaipur
8.	Mr. Kallol Chakraborthy	Society for People's Awareness (SPAN), Kolkata
9.	Mr. Prafulla Kumar Sahoo	Centre for Youth and Social Development (CYSD), Bubanaeshwar
10.	Dr. A. K. Shivakumar	Development Economist & Policy Advisor
11.	Ms. M. Sumitra	Ankuram, Telangana
12.	Ms. Soumitra Roy	Vikas Samvad, Madhya Pradesh
13.	Mr. Melvil Pereira	North eastern Social Research Centre (NESRC), Guwahati
14.	Mr. Vikram Srinivas	Accountability Initiative, New Delhi
15.	Ms. Sudeshna Sengupta	Mobile Crèches, New Delhi
16.	Ms. Karuna Bishnoi	Independent Child Rights Activist, New Delhi
17.	Mr. Tajinder Sandhu	UNICEF, New Delhi
18.	Dr. Bishnu Mohapatra	Professor, Ajim Premji University, Bangalore
19.	Ms. Radhika Alkazi	ARTH-ASTHA, New Delhi
20.	Mr. Subrat Das	Centre for Budget Governance and Accountability (CBGA), New Delhi
21.	Ms. Happy Pant	Centre for Budget Governance and Accountability (CBGA), New Delhi
22.	Ms. Soumya	Centre for Budget Governance and Accountability (CBGA), New Delhi
23.	Mr. Jawed	Centre for Budget Governance and Accountability (CBGA), New Delhi
24.	Ms.Protiva Kundu	Centre for Budget Governance and Accountability (CBGA), New Delhi
25.	Mr. Manjoor Ali	Centre for Budget Governance and Accountability (CBGA), New Delhi
26.	Ms. Shweta Verma	CRY, New Delhi
27.	Mr. Shubhro Roy	National Social Watch
28.	Ms. Surbhi	Terre des Hommes
29.	Ms. Devika Singh	Mobile Crèches
30.	Ms. Archana Srivastava	SAHAJ, Vadodara
31.	Ms. Manushi Sheth	SAHAJ, Vadodara
32.	Ms. Kiran Bhatty	Centre for Policy Research (CPR), New Delhi
33.	Dr. Vandana Prasad	Public Health Resource Network (PHRN)
34.	Ms. Priya Tiwari	Psychotherapist, New Delhi
35.	Ms. Marina George	CRPD, New Delhi

36.	Ms. Enakshi Ganguly Thukral	HAQ: Centre for Child rights, New Delhi
37.	Ms. Bharti Ali	HAQ: Centre for Child rights, New Delhi
38.	Ms. Farhana Yasmin	HAQ: Centre for Child rights, New Delhi
39.	Mr.Kumar Shailabh	HAQ: Centre for Child rights, New Delhi
40.	Mr.Shahbaz Khan Sherwani	HAQ: Centre for Child rights, New Delhi
41.	Mr. Devesh Agnihotri	HAQ: Centre for Child rights, New Delhi
42.	Ms. Ankita Gupta	HAQ: Centre for Child rights, New Delhi
43.	Ms. Rupmani Chhetri	HAQ: Centre for Child rights, New Delhi
44.	Ms. Preeti Singh	HAQ: Centre for Child rights, New Delhi
45.	Mr. Aditya Kumar	HAQ: Centre for Child rights, New Delhi
46.	Ms. Sauda Shafiq (Intern)	HAQ: Centre for Child rights, New Delhi
47.	Mr. Timo Feihn (Intern)	HAQ: Centre for Child rights, New Delhi