



## Events || September, 2016

### Research

- Prerana-ATC is empirically studying how the POCSO Act is unfolding on the ground in the state of Maharashtra.
- Cross Border Child Trafficking, a Rapid Appraisal Study undertaken by Prerana ATC at the behest of CARITAS India is nearing completion.

### Visitors to ATC Prerana

- Ms. Evan Ryan Assistant Secretary, Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs USA visited Prerana. Ms. Evan Ryan, Assistant Secretary, Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs visited the Falkland Road project of Prerana in the afternoon of 28th September 2016. She was accompanied by 4 officers from the US Consulate, Mumbai. In her two-hour visit Ms. Ryan spent time with Dr. Pravin Patkar and Ms. Priti Patkar in understanding the situation of human trafficking, especially of the children of prostituted women, and Prerana's intervention therein. Ms. Ryan subsequently spent an hour interacting with the children.
- On 10<sup>th</sup> September 2016 Tappas Voyages and London Business School invited 10 leaders from the business community from over 7 different countries to visit Prerana for an orientation. The visitors also participated with the children in the ongoing activity that was being held at the Falkland Rd centre. The visitors were given prior orientations to Prerana's Child Protection Policy



## Training & Capacity Building conducted by ATC Prerana

- Ms. Priti Patkar of ATC Prerana Team conducted a session for the 2<sup>nd</sup> year MSW students of Tata Institute of Social Sciences attending the course "Marginalized and Vulnerable Children: Issues and Perspectives" on 6<sup>th</sup> September 2016
- A two-day workshop on Anti Human trafficking was conducted by ATC Prerana in collaboration with IJM for the 2<sup>nd</sup> Year students of Masters of Social work of College of Social Work Nirmala Niketan, Mumbai on the 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> of September. In all 42 student participants and 3 faculty members of the institution participated in the program. It was designed to equip the students with specific and substantive knowledge on the issue of Human trafficking. The training included sessions on concept clarity, intergenerational trafficking, Aftercare and Legal overview with the focus on role of Social worker. Dr. Pravin Patkar conducted a special session on Cross-Border Human Trafficking.

## Training & Capacity Building attended by ATC Prerana

- Vital Voices and Avon Foundation for Women collaborated to form the Global Partnership to end Violence against Women. The Justice Institute on Gender Based Violence is a program under this global initiative which has been conducted successfully in the Philippines and Colombia. From 9<sup>th</sup> to 11<sup>th</sup> September, the Justice Institute conducted a similar program on domestic violence and sexual assault in India.

Over the course of three days, international and local faculty engaged participants to develop strategies and action plans to overcome the challenges facing the prosecution of domestic violence in India. The group also openly discussed the challenges in the system and possible collaborative solutions to work around these issues. Representatives from the Law and Judiciary, Police Department, NGOs, Shelter Facilities were present in this session.

The ATC Team of Prerana partnered in organising this program also serving as the local faculty. It was a great opportunity to learn, network and deliberate on topics of concern while working in the sector.

- Dr. Pravin Patkar was invited by Caritas India as a Speaker on Child Trafficking, at an International Conference 'Change for Children and Children for Change', held on 22 & 23 September 2016, at India Habitat Centre, New Delhi. Dr. Pravin Patkar delivered the speech on 22nd September.
- On the 23<sup>rd</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> of September 2016 the ATC Team of Prerana was invited to serve as the resource for a 2 day Western India Regional Consultation on Children in Difficult Circumstances covering the states of Goa Maharashtra, Gujarat, and Madhya Pradesh. The consultation was organized by the Academy of Gandhian Studies in Collaboration with Plan India.



## Policy Analysis & Advocacy

- Dr. Pravin Patkar disseminated his critique of the 4<sup>th</sup> Draft Bill of the proposed Anti-Human Trafficking law 2016 released by the Ministry of Women & Child Development, Government of India on 23<sup>rd</sup> September '16. The critique was very exhaustive running into approx. 55 pages. The same was found useful and was circulated by many organizations working on the issue of trafficking and child protection. The comments by Dr. Patkar were supported and recommended to the MWCD- Government of India by the head of South Asian Regional Initiative to End Violence Against Children the apex body of South Asian Association for Regional cooperation (SAARC), HAQ, IACR and many other platforms. The media like UNI, Indian Express, DNA, Indian Express, Thomson Reuters interviewed Dr. Patkar and gave adequate publicity to the comments. The Ministry of Women & Child Development, Government of India dropped the 4<sup>th</sup> Draft and undertook a fresh exercise to redraft the Bill.

### 4th draft of anti-trafficking bill compounds embarrassment

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Mumbai: True with the repeated embarrassment of withdrawing drafts of the new anti-trafficking bill, the Union Ministry of Women & Child Development (MWCD) had hoped that the panel which has been working on the bill since November 2015 would have got its act together by Wednesday for the inter-ministerial meeting to discuss the 4th draft.

"However the same problems continued with panels continuing to pull in different directions to ensure their points remain," said a senior bureaucrat in the ministry who was present. "The ministry is upset that instead of

efforts at creating a strong law, the panel is using it as a ploy to create mechanisms to rehabilitate favoured officials for a five-year office term with all the perks of a cabinet minister."

The 3rd draft, readers will recall, had done away with provisions of the current law ITPA Sec 8(b), against soliciting in public places, by removing brothel keeping, detaining anyone (eg withholding passport, work permit, other documents, payments, savings, jewellery, child or clothes) and pimping from the purview of crime. Many working against trafficking had expressed serious shock over what they called "undesirable changes" in anti-trafficking laws.



Many like leading anti-trafficking expert Pravin Patkar called the 4th draft "an apology for a law." According to him, "It has nothing substantial to offer. It only wants to create some high-powered bodies for accommodating working and retired government officers and their position-

hungry protégés." He wondered why the panel continued to disregard the wealth of authentic local and global sources of expertise. "It ignores a range of a success stories and path breaking replicable models of intervention. It continues to get confused between an organised crime which it cannot define and a complex socio-economic and cultural problem which it cannot address," he told DNA and added, "It still wants to push an uncalculated for new law instead of fine tuning and further strengthening existing laws by incorporating success stories and path breaking interventions."

He lamented, "Having lost its substance because of the embar-

assing failures being highlighted in this paper, the fourth draft too continues to desperately peddle bureaucratic structures and tries to introduce meaningless sections to fill the space."

He cited an instance. "If looting a shop is an offence then the fourth draft makes 10 sections out of that by stating Sec 1. Looting a grain shop is an offence, Sec 2. Looting a fabric shop is an offence, Sec 3. Looting an electronics shop is an offence... Sec 10. Looting a chemist's shop is an offence. Then it proceeds to state Sec 11. Looting a shop with a gun is an offence. Sec 12. Looting a shop owned by a handicapped person is an offence. One doesn't need to be legal eagle to see that

any competent legal professional would've put it all in one single section and added situations wherein it will be considered as aggravated crime."

Given the fate of the first three drafts, which the MWCD has trashed in face of criticism, many are surprised that the "experts" have come out with yet another poorly articulated draft. The bureaucrat in the ministry who was present called it unfortunate. "On one hand the voluntary sector protests a lot saying this government doesn't give them enough representation in the decision making process. Yet when it does participate, look at how many times the ministry has been embarrassed."

## Networking

- Prerana under its initiative 'Aarambh-India' in collaboration with Internet Watch Foundation (IWF) launched India's 1st Internet Hotline to report online Child Sexual Imagery. The hotline will help prevent sexually explicit images/videos of children from being shared and going viral by enabling any citizen to easily report such content. Ms. Maneka Gandhi, Hon. Minister of Women and Child Development inaugurated the hotline on 19<sup>th</sup> September 2016 at Juniper Hall, India Habitat Center, New Delhi.

