



Protecting the Innocent: A Global and National Perspective on Children's Rights

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ABSTRACT

*One of the most vulnerable groups in society is children, who need extra care to maintain their development, safety, and well-being. In *Protecting the Innocent: A Global and National Perspective on Children's Rights*, national policies and international frameworks are compared to examine the ethical, social, and legal aspects of children's rights. The effect of important international agreements, including the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), on national policies and programs is examined in this article. Child labour, trafficking, abuse, and lack of access to healthcare and education are still issues even though many nations have made great progress in protecting children. The paper emphasizes the effectiveness and shortcomings of current policies while highlighting the necessity of more robust enforcement mechanisms and cooperative efforts between communities, organizations, and governments. By highlighting actual situations and effective practices, this discussion highlights how crucial it is to prioritize children's rights as a cornerstone of social justice. Last but not least, *Protecting the Innocent* urges a revitalized dedication to child protection, guaranteeing that all children, irrespective of their nationality or origin, have the chance to develop in a secure and supportive setting.*

Keywords: *Children, Rights, Laws, Policies*

INTRODUCTION

Children and childhood across the world, have broadly been construed in terms of a ‘golden age’ that is synonymous with innocence, freedom, joy, play and the like. It is the time when one hardly shoulders any kind of responsibility or obligations¹. However, for millions of children worldwide, childhood is a period of hardship rather than happiness, when their innocence is taken away too soon by exploitation, hunger, violence, and neglect. Notwithstanding their place of birth, all children are entitled to care, protection, and the opportunity to develop in a secure and caring setting. In practice, however, many children are deprived of even the most fundamental rights, such as the freedom to be children, healthcare, education, and protection from danger.

Seeing how vulnerable children are, the world has united in a number of ways to protect their rights. Numerous national governments, non-profit organizations, and international organizations such as the United Nations (UN) and UNICEF have put in a great deal of effort to develop laws and regulations that will shield children from exploitation, abuse, and injustice. The 1989 adoption of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) marked a turning point in history by establishing explicit guidelines for the rights of all children, including protection, healthcare, education, and the freedom to express oneself and be heard.

But the battle is not yet over. Child labour, trafficking, violence, war-related displacement, and illiteracy continue to deprive children of their basic rights in spite of these international agreements. Children in certain regions of the world are deprived of a future due to poverty, which compels them into early labour. Children in war-torn areas may be compelled to serve as child soldiers, be abandoned by their families, or be left to fend for themselves. Cases of discrimination, neglect, and child abuse continue even in developed countries.

Governments are not solely responsible for protecting children. Ensuring that every kid is treated with respect and dignity is a responsibility shared by individuals, communities, and families. The framework for child safety is established by laws and rules, but what really makes a difference is group effort, awareness, and compassion.

Who is a Child?

The issue with child rights starts with the definition of a child, which varies both inside India and across international conventions and regulations.

According to the *United Nation Convention on the Rights of the Child, 1989*, a child means every human being below the age of 18 years, unless the law applicable to the child, majority is attained earlier.²

¹Savita Bhakhry, *Children in India and their Rights*, National Human Right Commission, [https://nhrc.nic.in/sites/default/Savita Bhakhry files/ChildrenRights.pdf](https://nhrc.nic.in/sites/default/Savita%20Bhakhry%20files/ChildrenRights.pdf)

² Article 1 (<https://www.ohchr.org/en/instruments-mechanisms/instruments/convention-rights-child>)

According to the *Hague Convention on Protection of Children and Cooperation in Respect of Inter country Adoption 1993*, any individual under the age of eighteen is considered a child.³

Definition of a Child under Indian Laws

According to the *Indian Majority Act of 1875*, a major is an individual who has reached the age of 18.⁴ However, if a guardian has been appointed by the court, the age of majority in guardianship-related cases is 21.

A person under the age of 14 is considered a child⁵, according to the *Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act, 1986* (Amended in 2016), which also forbids the employment of minors in all vocations and teenagers (ages 14 to 18) in hazardous jobs.

The Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act, 2012, defines a person under the age of eighteen as a child⁶.

The Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015 defines a child as a person below the age of 18 years⁷.

The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education (RTE) Act, 2009, defines a child as a person between 6 and 14 years of age.⁸

The Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006 defines a child as a male below 21 years and A female below 18 years.⁹

The Factories Act, 1948 defines a child as a person who has not completed his 15 years of age.¹⁰

Hindu Minority and Guardianship Act, 1956 defines a minor as a person below the age of eighteen years.¹¹

INTERNATIONAL FRAMEWORK FOR CHILDREN'S RIGHTS

International organizations such as the United Nations (UN), UNICEF, Save the Children, and various human rights groups play a crucial role in advocating for children's rights. Global treaties and policies set

³Article1(<https://www.ohchr.org/en/instruments-mechanisms/instruments/convention-rights-child#:~:text=PART%20I-,Article%201,Article%202>)

⁴ Section 3 of the Act

⁵ Section 2(ii) of the Act

⁶ Section 2(d) Of the Act

⁷ Section 2(12) of the Act

⁸ Section 2(n) of the Act

⁹ Section 2(a) of the Act

¹⁰ Section2(c) of the Act

¹¹ Section 4(a) of the Act

legal frameworks for member nations, ensuring that children's welfare remains a priority. Despite progress, challenges like child labour, trafficking, poverty, and war continue to put millions of children at risk.

Declaration of the Rights of the Child (1924)

Current frameworks of children's rights have their roots in World War I, and the social reforms of the late 1800s questioned Aristotle's limit on governmental participation in the home. During that period, Eglantyne Jebb saw firsthand the atrocities that young people went through as conflicts destroyed their neighbourhoods, depriving them of food, water, and shelter, and exposing them to illnesses. Together with Dorothy Buxton, her sister, Jebb established the *Save the Children Fund* in 1919. Protecting and helping young people who had been affected by war was the fund's main objective. Save the Children Fund changed its name to the International Save the Children Union a year later. The Union's Declaration of the Rights of the Child was adopted in 1923. This Declaration was later delivered to the League of Nations by Jebb. Africa, Asia, the Middle East, Europe, and the Americas were among the more than 60 country states that made up the League's membership. Many people believe that the Geneva Declaration, which was adopted by the League of Nations in 1924, was the first international accord on children's rights. Given that it was established more than ninety years ago, it represents a significant advancement in the rights of young people. Simply put, the 1924 Declaration was a declaration. It was a statement that member nations agreed with the principles presented in the Declaration, not a convention where governments committed to enacting and upholding national laws pertaining to children's rights. But because the various governments that comprised the League of Nations authorized it, it was a significant step. And on the basis of that, some governments took action to increase awareness of children's rights.¹²

According to the 1924 Declaration, a young person cannot rely on the government to make sure she is fed, educated, or protected from exploitation. The 1924 Declaration did not, in retrospect, succeed in shielding youth from deprivation. During the next major armed battle, it had little effect on youth interests and welfare. The Holocaust, forced military service, forced labor in war factories, and other abuses of young people's rights and dignity are all well-known consequences of World War II. The Geneva Declaration was unable to prevent any of these damages to youth.

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights

With the end of World War II approaching, steps were taken to establish the United Nations, which would succeed the League of Nations. The adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) was one of the new UN's first moves. The Universal proclamation of Human Rights, like the Geneva Declaration of 1924, is a principled proclamation. The national governments that signed it expressed their agreement with these ideas. Except for Articles 25 and 26, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights does not differentiate between

¹²Brian K. Gran, *An International Framework of Children's Rights*, Annual Review of Law and Social Science

adults and children. Article 25 declares that all children should get equal social assistance, while Article 26 states that parents have the right to choose their child's education.

Otherwise, there is no differentiation between young people and other categories in the UDHR. Human rights are universal, inalienable, indivisible, interdependent, and linked, according to the UDHR. Since they apply to everyone, human rights are universal. Since a person cannot sell or have a right taken away, they are unalienable. Since "none can be fully enjoyed without the others," human rights are interconnected and rely on one another.¹³ These attributes are applicable to all human rights, which are accessible to all people, including children.

The Declaration of the Rights of the Child (1959)

Despite the fact that the UDHR is universal, the 1959 Declaration of the Rights of the Child was adopted by the UN General Assembly. Recognizing that the 1924 Geneva Declaration had not granted youth rights equivalent to the UDHR, the UN adopted the 1959 Declaration. The United Nations claims in the preamble of the Declaration that "mankind" owes a child "special safeguards and care, including appropriate legal protection, before as well as after birth." The 1959 Declaration outlines the rights of children, including protection from exploitation and education. Ultimately, it appears that the UN and its member states decided that a further declaration of children's rights was required even after adopting the UDHR.¹⁴

International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights

Adopted in 1966, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) and the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) came into effect in 1976. The UDHR, ICCPR, and ICESCR are commonly referred to as the International Bill of Human Rights (United Nations 2017). Covenants are the ICCPR and ICESCR. A national government can sign a covenant after it has been adopted by the UN, and then ratify it (or accede, which has the same practical effect as ratification). A national government's intention to enshrine the covenant's articles and values in national legislation is indicated by its ratification of the covenant.

As of the beginning of 2017, 169 and 165 national governments, respectively, had ratified the ICCPR and ICESCR. Then, human rights that are accessible to everyone worldwide are outlined in the ICCPR and ICESCR. Young people are not excluded from them, nor are they exclusive to adults. However, some rights do appear to be primarily applicable to youth. For example, according to the ICCPR, a person under the age of 18 should not be executed. Prearranged marriages are prohibited¹⁵. Along with rights to nationality and

¹³ UN Population Fund, 2005. ,Human Rights Principles. New York: UN Popul. Fund.(<http://www.unfpa.org/resources/human-rights-principles>)

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ (Articles 22 and 23, paragraph 3)

birth registration¹⁶, there is an intrinsic right to life¹⁷. Young people have the right not to be imprisoned alongside adults under Articles 10 para 2(b) and 3. Additionally, it declares that after being convicted of a crime, young people have the right to rehabilitation.¹⁸

Despite emphasizing universal human rights such as economic, social, and cultural rights, this covenant also emphasizes rights unique to youth. Everyone has the right to universal primary education, as stated in Article 13, paragraph 2a of the ICESCR. A progressive right to secondary education is also outlined in Article 13, and national governments are supposed to make secondary education a universal one. Article 10 of the ICESCR makes it very evident that children are the focus of the two covenants. According to this article's third paragraph, youth should get "special measures of protection and assistance." The remainder of paragraph 3 concentrates on safeguards against employment and exploitation, however it is unclear what these protections and assistances are. It appears that the family residence is not covered by these protections. According to Article 10, young people shouldn't be exploited financially or put in jobs that endanger their morals, health, ability to develop normally, or life. Although the covenants are first recognized as human rights accords, the ICCPR and ICESCR do define rights that belong to young people, such as freedom from economic exploitation.

The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)

The UNCRC is the most well-known treaty on children's rights, having been adopted by the UN General Assembly in 1989 and widely regarded as the most popular human rights treaty. Only the United States has not ratified the UNCRC, which is a convention as opposed to the declarations of 1924 and 1959. Like the ICCPR and ICESCR, when a member party ratifies the UNCRC, it signifies its intention to make the Convention's provisions national law and practice. The foundation of a worldwide framework for children's rights is the UNCRC. The UNCRC reiterates the 1959 Declaration when it declares that peoples in UN member states have "reaffirmed their faith in fundamental human rights and in the dignity and worth of the human person" through the UN Charter.

The UNCRC contains guiding principles, including non discrimination¹⁹ and protecting the child's best interests²⁰. Children's rights, including the right to sufficient nourishment and safety²¹, are the focus of another set of UNCRC articles. A third set of UNCRC provisions outlines safeguards for youth, such as freedom from exploitation and abuse²². The rights and freedoms that allow youth to participate are outlined in the last set of UNCRC articles, such as the rights to association²³ and information²⁴.

¹⁶ (Article 24, paragraph 2 and 3)

¹⁷ (Article 6, paragraph 1),

¹⁸ (Article 14, paragraph 4).

¹⁹ (Article 2).

²⁰ Article 3

²¹ Article 24

²² Article 19

²³ Article 15

²⁴ Article 13

There are now three UNCRC optional protocols. The first is the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child, which addresses child pornography, child prostitution, and child sales. This optional convention was adopted in 2000, and as of early 2017, 173 national governments—including the US in 2002—had approved it. The Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the participation of children in armed conflict is a second optional protocol to the UNCRC. In 2000, this optional protocol was also embraced. The Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on a Communications Procedure is the third optional protocol to the UNCRC.

THE UN COMMITTEE

To advance children's rights as international norms, the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child is a crucial sociolegal organization. Following ratification or accession to the UNCR Coroptional protocols, a country government is required to submit a report to the UN Committee. In 1991, the UN Committee underwent its initial formation. There are 18 specialists who are regarded as independent members of this group. The governments of these independent experts' nations have ratified the UNCRC. Members of the Committee function independently, even though their national governments designate each expert. Neither her government nor her nation are represented by her. Each Committee member may be reelected after serving a four-year term.

These professionals are supposed to be well-versed in human rights and to be of high moral standing. In reality, Committee members come from a variety of geographic locations, occupations and educational levels.

Important components of this global framework for children's rights are these independent experts and the legitimacy they offer. As a group, the Committee plays a crucial role in putting into practice both international standards for children's rights and a global framework of organizations and entities tasked with promoting these rights. The Committee's requirement that national governments submit reports is one of its main instruments for promoting these international standards. Two years following ratification or accession to the UNCRC or any optional protocols, each national government is required to submit its initial report to the Committee. After that, a report must be submitted by the national government every five years. Representatives of the national government are asked to address the Committee after the report is filed. Typically, the Committee meets three times a year. Every session includes a three-week plenary after a one-week preessional working group. The Committee asks group representatives to present information on children's rights challenges in specific nations at the preessional working group. UN agencies, non-governmental organizations, national human rights organizations, children's rights organizations, and youth organizations are a few examples of these groups.

The Committee then gives a list of topics to be covered at its meeting with representatives of the national government. These sessions are public. During its visit, each country is assigned two members of the Committee. These participants provide a summary of the meeting, its conclusions, and suggestions at the end of the session. After then, national government representatives are allowed to make one more comment.

Concluding Observations of the nation's UNCRC implementation efforts are filed by the Committee. On the final day of the committee's meeting, these concluding remarks are made public. Five years later, in its next report to the Committee, Permits the state to make special provisions for children, allowing for affirmative action to promote their welfare. The national government is supposed to address these Concluding Observations. This strategy supports the idea that it is the duty of the national government to advance children's rights. The Committee's norms of procedure are available on their website in case national governments are unaware of what is expected of them.²⁵

World Declaration on the Survival, Protection and Development of Children in 1990

On September 30, 1990, in New York, the World Summit for Children adopted the World Declaration on the Survival, Protection, and Development of Children. World leaders made a historic pledge to enhance the lives of children everywhere. The proclamation placed a strong emphasis on children's rights to life, health care, food, education, and safety. It listed specific objectives to be met by the year 2000, such as lowering child mortality, enhancing maternal health, and guaranteeing access to clean water and basic education. Future international initiatives centred on children, such as the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), were made possible by this declaration.

Convention on the Prohibition of the Worst Forms of Child Labour in 1999, On June 17, 1999, the International Labour Organization (ILO) enacted Convention which is a on the Prohibition and Immediate Action for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labor. It seeks to eliminate the most dangerous and exploitative types of child labor, such as forced labor, child prostitution, trafficking, slavery, and work that puts children's safety, health, or morals in jeopardy. The convention urges states to take immediate steps to outlaw and stop these practices, fortify legal structures, and offer impacted children education and rehabilitation. One of the ILO agreements that has been ratified the most, it supports international initiatives to defend children's rights.²⁶

National Measures: Laws and Policies

A. Constitutional Provisions for Children in India

The Indian Constitution establishes a number of rights and safeguards for children, assuring their well-being, growth and safety from exploitation. These articles serves as foundation for child laws in India.

²⁵ Brian K. Gran, An International Framework of Children's Rights, Annual Review of Law and Social Science

²⁶ Convention 182 on The Worst Forms of Child Labour, 1999, available at <https://www.humanium.org/en/child-labour-convention/>

Article 15(3): Permits the state to make special provisions for children, allowing for affirmative action to promote their welfare.

Article 21A: provides free and compulsory education to all children between the ages of 6 and 14. The Right to Education Act, 2009 is an extension of this provision.

Article 24: Prohibits the employment of children below the age of 14 in hazardous industries.

Article 39(e) and 39(f): Directs the state to ensure that children are not forced into vocations unsuitable to their age and strength and that they receive proper care and opportunities for development.

Article 45: Encourages the state to provide early childhood care and education for children below the age of six.

Article 51 A (k): It shall be the duty of every citizen of India who is a parent or guardian to provide opportunities for education to his child or, as the case may be, ward between the age of six and fourteen years.

B. Legislations Related to Children in India

- *Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation Act) 1986* aims at preventing and regulating child labour. It prohibits employment of children below 14 years in hazardous occupations²⁷ and processes such as automobile, bidi- making, carpet weaving, handloom industry, mines and domestic work. The Act was later amended in 2016 to strengthen child protection laws, completely banning the employment of children under 14 in all occupations and restricting adolescents (14–18 years) from hazardous work.²⁸ The law imposes penalties for violations²⁹, including imprisonment and fines, and emphasizes the importance of education through alignment with the Right to Education Act, 2009.
- *The Immoral Trafficking (Prevention) Act (ITPA), 1956* aimed at preventing human trafficking and commercial sexual exploitation. Originally enacted as the Suppression of Immoral Traffic in Women and Girls Act (SITA), 1956, it was later amended and renamed ITPA to provide broader protection. This Act prohibits commercial sexual exploitation and all cases relating to prostitution registered under the Act. The Act also says that if any person over the age of 18 years knowingly lives wholly or in part on the earning of the prostitution of any other person shall be punishable with imprisonment up to 2 years or with fine up to Rs1000 or both³⁰, or where such earnings relate to the prostitution of a child or a minor, shall be punishable with imprisonment for 7-10 years. The Act prohibits the activities relating to prostitution in a public place or within 200 metres from a public place³¹.

²⁷ Section 3 of the Act

²⁸ Section 3A of the Act

²⁹ Section 14 of the Act

³⁰ Section 4 of the Act

³¹ Section 7 of the Act

- *The Pre-Conception and Pre-Natal Diagnostic Techniques (PCPNDT) Act, 1994* enacted to stop female feticide and arrest the declining sex ratio in India. The act banned prenatal sex determination.
- *Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006*: The act forbids child marriage in India. It also protects and provides assistance to the victims of child marriages. It defines the legal marriage age as 18 years for girls and 21 years for boys, making child marriage illegal and voidable at the request of the minor. The Act provides for punishment³², including imprisonment and fines, for those promoting or conducting child marriages. It also empowers courts to issue injunctions to prevent child marriages³³ and offers legal protection to victims. This law strengthens previous regulations and aligns with international child protection norms.
- *The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009* guarantees free and compulsory education for all children aged 6 to 14 years³⁴ in government and certain private schools. It mandates a 25% reservation for underprivileged children in private schools³⁵, prohibits the expulsion or detention of students until Class 8, and ensures quality education by setting infrastructure and teacher qualification standards. The Act aims to bridge educational disparities, promote inclusive learning, and uphold education as a fundamental right under Article 21A of the Indian Constitution.
- *The Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act, 2012* is a comprehensive Indian law enacted to safeguard children from sexual abuse and exploitation. It criminalizes offenses such as sexual assault, sexual harassment, and pornography involving minors (below 18 years). The Act ensures child-friendly judicial procedures, including in-camera trials, special courts, and protection of the victim's identity. In 2019, amendments introduced stricter punishments, including the life imprisonment for aggravated sexual assault³⁶. POCSO aligns with international child rights frameworks, emphasizing the best interests and dignity of children.
- *The Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015* governs the treatment and protection of children in conflict with the law and those in need of care and protection. It replaced the Juvenile Justice Act, 2000, introducing stricter provisions for juveniles aged 16–18 involved in heinous crimes, allowing them to be tried as adults under certain conditions³⁷. The Act also focuses on rehabilitation, adoption procedures, and the establishment of Child Welfare Committees³⁸ (CWCs) and Juvenile Justice Boards³⁹ (JJBs). It aligns with international child rights principles, emphasizing the best interests of the child.

C. National Policies

- **National Policy for Children, 1974** : India is one of the few states that has written a National Policy for Children. This policy provides the conceptual basis for an integrated approach to address the whole child and commits the State to provide adequate services to children, both before and after

³² Section 11 of the Act

³³ Section 13 of the Act

³⁴Section 3 of the Act

³⁵ Section 12(1)(c) of the Act

³⁶ Section 6 of the Act

³⁷ Section 15 of the Act

³⁸ Section 27 of the Act

³⁹ Section 4 of the Act

birth and through the period of growth, to ensure their full physical, mental and social development. It declared that children are the nation's supreme assets and that children's programmes should find a prominent place in our national plans for development of human resources⁴⁰.

- **National Charter For Children:**

The Government of India has also adopted the National Charter for Children, which has been prepared after obtaining the views/comments and suggestions of the State governments/UT Administrations, concerned Ministries and Departments and experts in the field. The National Charter is a statement of intent embodying the Government's agenda for children. The document emphasizes Government of India's commitment to children's rights to survival, health and nutrition, standard of living, play and leisure, early childhood care, education, protection or the girl child, empowering adolescents, equality, life and liberty, name and nationality, freedom of expression, freedom of association and peaceful assembly, the right to a family and the right to be protected from economic exploitation and all forms of abuse. The document also provides for protection of children in difficult circumstances, children with disabilities, children from marginalized and disadvantaged communities, and child victims. The document while stipulating the duties of the State and the Community towards children also emphasizes the duties of children towards family, society and the Nation. The National Charter for Children was notified in the Gazette of India on 9th February, 2004.⁴¹

- **National Plan of Action for Children, 2005** :For the first time in the history of planning for children, India has adopted a clear understanding and definition of the child in the NPAC 2005. The NPAC definition of the child as a person up to the age of 18 years and its clear declaration that 'all rights apply to all age-groups, including before birth' reiterates the 1974 National Policy mandate that the State takes responsibility for children 'both before and after birth', and the child's interests are to receive paramount attention. This national reaffirmation must set the frame for future planning and intervention to secure the well-being of all children of the country and provide them a caring and protective environment.⁴² The National Plan of Action for Children, 2005 has identified some key areas keeping in mind priorities and the intensity of the challenges that require utmost and sustained attention in terms of outreach, programme interventions and resource allocation, so as to achieve the necessary targets and ensure the rights and entitlements of children at each stage of childhood. These are reducing infant mortality rate, maternal mortality, malnutrition among children, Achieving 100 % civil registration of births etc.
- **National Policy for Children 2013:** On April 26, 2013, the Indian government adopted the National Policy for Children, 2013. The policy covered all children in the nation's territory and authority and recognized anybody under the age of eighteen as a child. It recognized that protecting children's rights requires a multifaceted, multi sectoral strategy. Four major priority areas were chosen under

⁴⁰ Geeta Chopra, Child Rights in India Challenges and Social Action, Springer New Delhi, 2015

⁴¹ Programmes and Policy measures for Child welfare, available at: <https://pib.gov.in/newsite/erecontent.aspx?reid=23966>

⁴² Supra 40 at pg.38

the policy for targeted attention: participation, education and development, health and nutrition, and survival.⁴³

D. Institutional Frameworks for Child Welfare

- **The National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR)** was established in March 2007 in accordance with the 2005 Act of Parliament, the Commission for Protection of Child Rights Act. The commission's job is to make sure that all laws, policies, programs, and administrative procedures align with the Indian constitution's enshrined child rights perspective. A person in the birth to eighteen age range is considered a kid. The National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR) acknowledges the urgency of all national child-related policies and emphasizes the universality and inviolability of child rights. The commission places a high priority on protecting all children between the ages of 0 and 18. Priority efforts for the most vulnerable children are defined by policies. This includes concentrating on underdeveloped areas, communities, or kids in particular situations, and so on. According to the NCPCR, if only a small number of children are addressed, it may be a mistake to exclude many vulnerable children who might not fit into the specified or targeted categories. The Commission believes that all children's rights are equally important and that they are interrelated and mutually reinforcing.⁴⁴
- **The National Institute of Public Cooperation and Child Development (NIPCCD)** is a renowned organization that facilitates voluntary action, research, training, and documentation on women and child development in 1966. It operates as an independent entity within the Ministry of Women and Child Development Department, Government of India. With its four regional centers in Guwahati, Banaglore, Lucknow, and Indore, the organization was founded in New Delhi. The Institute's focus areas include child care initiatives related to nutrition and maternal and child health, early childhood education and care, childhood disabilities, children's good mental health, and child care support services.⁴⁵
- **The Central Adoption Resource Authority (CARA)** is an independent organization under the Indian government's Ministry of Women and Child Development. CARA, which mostly works with recognized agencies to adopt orphaned, abandoned, and surrendered children. CARA has been authorized as the Central Authority to handle both domestic and international adoptions of children in accordance with the 1993 Hague Convention on Inter-country Adoptions.⁴⁶

⁴³ National Policy for Children, 2013, available at: <https://iaspoint.com/national-policy-for-children-2013/>

⁴⁴ Supra note 40 at pg.39

⁴⁵ Chinmayee Satpathy, *Child Welfare Policies and programmes in India*, YOJANA November 2012

⁴⁶ *ibid*

Conclusion

Every society has a fundamental obligation to preserve and promote children's rights, and both international and Indian frameworks offer a solid basis for doing so. Globally, the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) serves as the cornerstone, emphasizing a child's right to survival, development, protection, and participation. Organizations such as UNICEF and the International Labour Organization (ILO) further strengthen efforts to eliminate child labour, exploitation, and discrimination.

India's dedication to child welfare is reaffirmed by the Constitution of India as well as by legislation such as the Protection of Children from Sexual Offenses (POCSO) Act of 2012, the Juvenile Justice Act of 2015, and the Right to Education Act of 2009. Children's rights are further protected by policies like the 2013 National Policy for Children and organizations like the National Commission for Protection of Child Rights. Notwithstanding the notable advancements, issues including child labour, human trafficking, malnourishment, and limited educational opportunities still exist. To close implementation and enforcement gaps, governments, civil society, and international organizations must work together. We can create a world where every child is safe, empowered, and given the chance to succeed by putting children's rights first.

