

Capacity Building for National Care Leaver Network

Date: 19th June 2023

Venue: Zorba the Buddha, Ghitorni

Objectives:

- Enhancing the care leavers' capacities on group work
- Enabling care leavers to resolve conflicts in group decision making
- Facilitating ownership of the National Care Leaver Network through eliciting opinions on the Statement of Purpose for the Network.

Session Plans:

TIME SLOT	ACTIVITY
9:30-10	Introduction; objectives
10-11	Ice breaking- name+ one superpower (put names in a bowl), everyone must pay attention to all introductions
11-11:30	Sharing dynamics of group work : <ul style="list-style-type: none">• What is a group (collective norms, goals, identities)• Size of the group• Subgroups• Leadership• Stages: Forming, storming, norming, performing• Group decision making techniques
11:30-12:30	Group activity (3 groups): In groups, talk amongst and about yourselves. Come up with a group name and a logo on what you think represents your group.
12:30-1:30	Presentations of group names+ logos (5 minutes per group) Reflections on roles, leadership, dynamics, subgroups
1:30-2:15	Lunch
2:15-2:30	Energizer
2:30-4:30	Brainstorming the Statement of Purpose for the Network
4:30-5:15	Recapitulation; way forward

Discussion during sessions:

- Participants of the NCLNs spoke of the group sizes of their respective states, which ranges from 20 to 700 participants. There was a discussion on the implications of group size in the functioning and management of groups.
- The discussion on sub-groups revealed that all participants observe formation of sub-groups in their respective networks, and the method to deal with the same is to acknowledge and accept difference of opinions, and using amicable ways to mediate wherever these differences may be a barrier in decision making. It was flagged that while formation of sub-groups is inevitable and healthy, leaders must engage and interact with different groups to acknowledge and absorb differences, lest the sub-groups feel alienated and tempted to move away from the group.
- The group activity on naming a group and designing a logo representative of what they feel represents the group revealed the strengths, aspirations and creativity of the group members. One group represented “support”, as all members identified with their ability to extend support to anyone in need. The second group came up with “Way- an app to cherish human relations by moving away from social media” and the third group represented “Pillar” in the middle of a ground, on the top of which lied a book. The group agreed with the significance of a pillar in the middle of turbulence in life, and how knowledge elevates one from the difficulties (represented by the ground from which the pillar emerged).
- There were discussions on the kinds of challenges the group members faced during the activity, how they came out from positions where they felt stuck, whether they came up with ideas right from the beginning or through the process or interaction, or towards the end- all enabling them to reflect on and appreciate the process and not just the outcome. There was also a discussion on the unsaid leaderships that emerged during the group work, and what those specific traits of leadership were.
- The context of the Statement of Purpose for the Network framed earlier was given by Nupur. This statement was broken down word by word to see what the implications of each term were, and whether the participants agreed with the terms.

Outcome and action ahead:

- The group gained an understanding of conducting group work and capturing the nuances of working in a group, specially while decision making.

- The group specified that instead of the term “collectivisation”, they would want to use terms like “bring together” or “reach out” or “advocate for” in the Statement of Purpose.
- The group agreed that they wanted to cater to ALL care leavers in all parts of the Indian subcontinent. How the marginalized groups amongst these care leavers will be addressed, will be outlined in the preamble of the Network manifesto. For example, the network would like to lay focus on care leavers with special abilities, or care leavers outside the gender binary.
- There was no unanimous vote on what is expected under “educational support”, as some care leavers wanted unconditional fee and support for any degrees they wished to pursue after their high school, while some others mentioned that “merit” should be a criterion to shortlist which care leavers could avail certain degrees.
- It was decided that the Network would meet virtually every month on the weekend. The next virtual meeting is scheduled on the third Saturday of July.
- Each leader of the Network is expected to educate and sensitize atleast 20 other members about the NCLN in a given month. These numbers will be reviewed every month in the virtual monthly catch up call.