

## **Minutes of Formative Meeting for Working Committee NCLN**

**Meeting Date: 6th July 2023**

**Meeting Mode: Online (Zoom Call)**

**Meeting Timings: 3:15 pm - 4:30 pm**

### **Meeting Context:**

On 19 August 2021, UNICEF and YuWaah successfully facilitated the launch of NCLN and an interface between care leavers and representatives of the government and private sector. Representatives of care leavers presented the challenges faced by them and support they wish to seek to transition into independent, contributing members of society. Representatives from the government and private sector expressed their support and commitment to care leavers in the form of skill training, job readiness and career guidance.

Further to this, on 1st September 2021, UNICEF called for a meeting with key civil society organizations working with care leavers to brainstorm on ways to strengthen and support NCLN to make it into an independent pan India body. The NCLN strengthening was taken next step by expanding the membership base and forming core group. This was done under partnership of UNICEF and Aide et Action. The first meeting of its core group members was organised in Delhi on 18<sup>th</sup> June '23. Eighteen care leavers from nine states of India represented their respective care leavers' society. The nine states are : Assam, Bihar, Delhi, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Odisha, Rajasthan ,Telangana and Uttar Pradesh. The members had a capacity building session around group dynamics and discussions were held on Statement of Purpose for NCLN, membership tenure and key asks from Govt/NGOS/CSR groups. The earlier drafted statement of purpose was revisited, and few changes have been suggested by care leavers. It was decided the statement of purpose need to be re-drafted with mutual consent. They will be discussing the meeting outcomes with their peer groups in states and work towards being more inclusive. Next online review meeting will be held on 19th July'23.

In context to above, to support the NCLN in becoming an independent functioning body, a Working Committee is envisaged which will support its expansion, strengthening and provide direction. UNICEF and Aide et Action planned the formative meeting of Working Committee on 6<sup>th</sup> July 2023.

**Objective:**

To establish a working committee to support expansion and strengthening of National Care Leavers Network.

**Participants:**

The participants comprised aftercare specialists, members of NGOs working on issues of care leavers and their rehabilitation and UNICEF state and National Child Protection Specialists.

- Mr. Pranab Panging (Aide et Action-GRO)
- Ms. Nupur Pande (Aide et Action-Delhi)
- Ms. Kiran Modi, (Udayan Care)
- Ms. Leena Prasad, (Udayan Care)
- Mr. Sadiq Ali, (Make a Difference)
- Mr. Vikas Sethia, JOSH Community
- Ms. Nidhi Saxena, JOSH Community
- Ms. Tavishi, JOSH Community
- Father Verghese, BOSCO, Bangalore
- Father Antoni, ECHO, Bangalore
- Ms. Bharathi, Joint Director, DWCD, Dharwad
- Ms. Priti Prasad, Catalysts for Social Change
- Ms. Shweta Modi, Catalysts for Social Change
- Mr. Thayagarajan Palani, Vinimay Trust, Mumbai
- Mr. Aditya Charegaonkar, Azim Premji Foundation, Mumbai
- Ms. Vandhana Kandhari (UNICEF, Delhi)
- Ms. Gargi Saha (UNICEF, Bihar)
- Mr. Manna Biswas (UNICEF, Odisha)
- Mr. Sonykutty Gorge (UNICEF, Karnataka)
- Ms. Alpa Krishnadas Vora (UNICEF, Maharashtra)
- Mr. Harish Jogi (Karnataka State-UNICEF project: Hubili-Dharwad)

**Key Discussions:**

Nupur and Vandana (Team Aide Et Action and UNICEF) welcomed the attendees and proceeded with introductions, expressing gratitude for their commitment to the cause. After this, Ms. Nupur presented timeline of all activities carried till date with their outcomes and further plans. Ms. Vandhana was invited to preside over discussions on Working Committee: membership, duration, role and modus operandi.

- During the timeline presentation, the issues discussed during first core group meeting of NCLN were also presented. There are few aspects regarding NCLN functioning that need more clarity even for decision making, like what should be the age limit of NCLN members, role of core group members vis-à-vis all members etc. Towards these questions, the suggestion came that these questions should be presented to NCLN members first and let them decide. Some of the meeting participants emphasized to ensure that the collectivisation of care leavers (National or State level networks) should lead to specific goals and not just stay tokenistic.
- Regarding the membership of Working committee:
  - Every member in working group should have atleast 2 State experience and be able to devote specific time.
  - Facilitate to Participate in the decision making to implementation, Networking and Advocacy.
  - To spread awareness about this segment so as to get as much support as possible from community as well
  - Creating awareness about the Care Leavers association and Advocating with the state and central govt to mandate the formation of CLN so that it gets formalised in the Mission Vatsalya.
- The working committee can be re-named as SYLC: Supporting Youth Leaving Care
- For NCLN expansion it was put forward that registration of every youth leaving CCLs as NCLN members be mandated. The registration of Care Leavers upon leaving institutions at both the state and national levels in anyways important, as there is currently no comprehensive database available.
- It was suggested that the NCLN's responsibilities should include ensuring appropriate technology infrastructure, bridging existing gaps, and establishing deadlines for tasks.
- Facilitating leadership development among Care Leavers through the creation of a curriculum and module to enhance their abilities, foster positive engagement, and cultivate leadership skills was emphasised. The importance of connecting Care Leavers with opportunities such as fellowships, courses, and internships were stressed again also the value of mentorship in expanding NCLN as network was suggested to be not undermined.
- Regarding role of working committee, it was discussed that the committee should also provide tangible support in terms of linkages with corporates, employment opportunities apart from others. Some areas identified and reiterated as areas of support for NCLN by working committee were:
  - Capacity Building design
  - Logistics support
  - Communication/social media support
  - Finding house accommodation

- Capacity building on advocacy issues with Governments
- Financial literacy
- Leadership development
- Legal and compliances
- Facilitate to develop support system to access the government system to share their views and opinion related to Policy and programme and also engage in the ground
- To develop it as a forum of belongingness
- Help them develop connections with global Care leavers community
- It was suggested that a roadmap should be drafted for operationalisation of NCLN keeping it as centre and working committee as a catalyst. Also, the NCLN may also need capacity building on developing action plans, on M&E and methods of measuring outcomes of their work

#### **Key Decisions:**

- It was anchored that there is a need to establish a solid foundation for the group before expanding to other networks and opportunities. The goals of NCLN should be realistic and achievable and be narrowed down as short term and long term goals.
- The Working Committee members should include representatives from most states. All members should demonstrate equal commitment to the group, recognizing the unique contributions of their organizations or individuals.
- The group should consist of 5-7 core members, with a minimum of four participants required for each meeting.
- CSA, UDAYAN CARE, JOSH Community, MAD volunteered as working members in capacity of organisations while Ms. Gargi from UNICEF Bihar and Mr. Aditya from Azim Premji Foundation volunteered to support in individual capacity.
- The initial membership of working committee core group would be two years.
- The larger group should hold meetings at least once every six months, while the core group should meet quarterly.
- The date for the next meeting is yet to be determined.

