

REPORT OF NEEDS ASSESSMENT AND DISTRICT CHILD PROTECTION PLAN OF KARIMGANJ DISTRICT IN ASSAM

1. Introduction:

Integrated Child Protection Scheme (ICPS) is a centrally sponsored scheme of Government – Civil Society Partnership to improve the well being of children in difficult circumstances and to reduce the vulnerability to situations and actions that lead to abuse, neglect, exploitation, abandonment and separation of children. The scheme aims to create a protective environment by improving regulatory frameworks, strengthening structures and professional capacities at national, state and district levels. Integrated Child Protection Service (ICPS) envisages setting up of a District Child Protection Society (DCPS), as the nodal organization at the district level in each district as a fundamental unit for the implementation of the scheme. Given the broad scope of the ICPS of promoting protective environment for children, it is imperative that a comprehensive plan, based on a thorough analysis of vulnerabilities and child protection concerns at the district level, be developed for each district along with strengthening the statutory bodies that will contribute towards ensuring that the scheme will have a far reaching impact, and will directly facilitate the implementation of the JJ Act and other interventions towards promoting protective environment for children at the community level.

1.2. Purpose of District Child Protection Plan

The broad objective of the District Child Protection Plan (DCPP) is to ensure effective implementation of child protection activities with due cognizance of the district specific needs of children in need of care and protection. The District Child Protection Plan will serve the following purposes:

- i. Contribute to effective implementation of child protection legislations, schemes and achievement of child protection goals;
- ii. Map all child related service providers and services at district for creating a resource directory;
- iii. Identify the needs of children in need of care, protection, shelter, counseling, restoration, rehabilitation etc for wholesome reintegration in the society;
- iv. Prioritize the needs for taking action in regard to these needs;
- v. Identify gaps in and provide recommendations for strengthening the implementation of family based non-institutional services including sponsorship, foster care, adoption and after care;
- vi. Use the information for effective delivery of services under Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2000 at district level;
- vii. Provide recommendations for effective rollout of district, block and village level child protection committees and provide context specific ToRs for these committees which will facilitate monitoring;
- viii. Identify gaps in and provide recommendations for effective Network and coordinate with all government departments and voluntary and civil society organizations working in the

field of child rights and protection;

- ix. Provide a framework for maintaining a database of all children in institutional care and non-institutional care at the district level;
- x. Identify capacity gaps of personnel (Government and Non-government) working under child protection system and provide a plan for training and capacity building to ensure improved child protection services to children;
- xi. Provide a framework for effective monitoring and supervision of ICPS in the district to review the progress and achievement of child protection activities.

1.3. Scope:

The need assessment has captured information on:

- i. Nature and magnitude of problems of children without family care, children engaged in various occupations, child victims of trafficking and early marriage, child abuse, children engaged in begging, children with special needs, children affected by HIV/AIDS, child victims of substance abuse, children prone to disaster, children of vulnerable groups like commercial sex workers, prisoners, child victims of migration to places within and outside the state;
- ii. Institutional care facilities for CNCP and JCL, care standards, status regarding restoration and rehabilitation of children, adequacy of manpower, capacity building of staff, funding pattern etc;
- iii. After Care and rehabilitation programme for children above 18 years;
- iv. Functioning of statutory bodies like CWC, JJB, SJPU, disposal of cases etc;
- v. Need for day care services for the street and working children, existing schemes to address the needs of child beggars; access to CHILDLINE services, if exists;
- vi. Status regarding non-institutional care options like adoption, foster care and sponsorship, etc. to children without family ties, functioning of SAAs, SARA;
- vii. Areas un-served/under served by child protection programmes;

1.4. Strategies:

Major strategies accomplished for District Need Assessment are as under:

- i. Identify, compile and complete desk review of all the relevant district specific reports, documents, available at state and district level from Government, NGOs, media and other sources. These could include reports from DSW/other concerned department, SSA and Education Dept, Labour Dept, NCLP, media, research organizations, educational institutions including Universities, NGOs and others;
- ii. Undertake field visits to select sites (communities, children's institutions, adoption agencies, drop-in shelters, and others, as necessary);
- iii. In-depth interviews with key informants, including the CWC, JJB, SJPU, SP and DC of District, community leaders, educators, NGOs, Pradhans and concerned others;
- iv. Draft a District CP Situation Analysis and a District Child Protection Plan (DCPP);
 - v. Share findings of the District CP Situational analysis and the draft DCPP with the DCPS;
- vi. Finalize the Situational analysis and DCPP with inputs from the DCPS.

1.5. Methodology:

The DCPD has been prepared in the following manner:

- i. Examine the tool for Needs Assessment at the District level and the pro-forma for District Level Child Protection Plan (DCPP) prepared by MWCD, GoI;
- ii. Finalize the tool and the format for DCPD and customize it accordingly, to make it state specific;
- iii. Organise orientation programme for the team members who will facilitate collection of information for Needs Assessment at the district level;
- iv. Consulted the District Administration and DCPS about the need for developing the DCPD and for which the nature of information required from the concerned district;
- v. Team members collected information as mentioned in the tool from Govt. officials, NGOs, Panchyats, Police etc to understand the child protection need of the district;
- vi. Team members organized some small group discussions with the NGOs and individual interaction with some key persons like GRP, Labour Commissioner, Tea Associations etc;
- vii. Team members collected the filled in tools from the District officials with their inputs;
- viii. The information received from secondary sources and from field survey and discussion with various stakeholders were collated and the major gaps in the child protection services were identified;
- ix. On the basis of the needs identified, a draft DCPD was prepared and shared with the DCPS and finally with the SCPS.

1.6. Name of the District covered: Karimganj

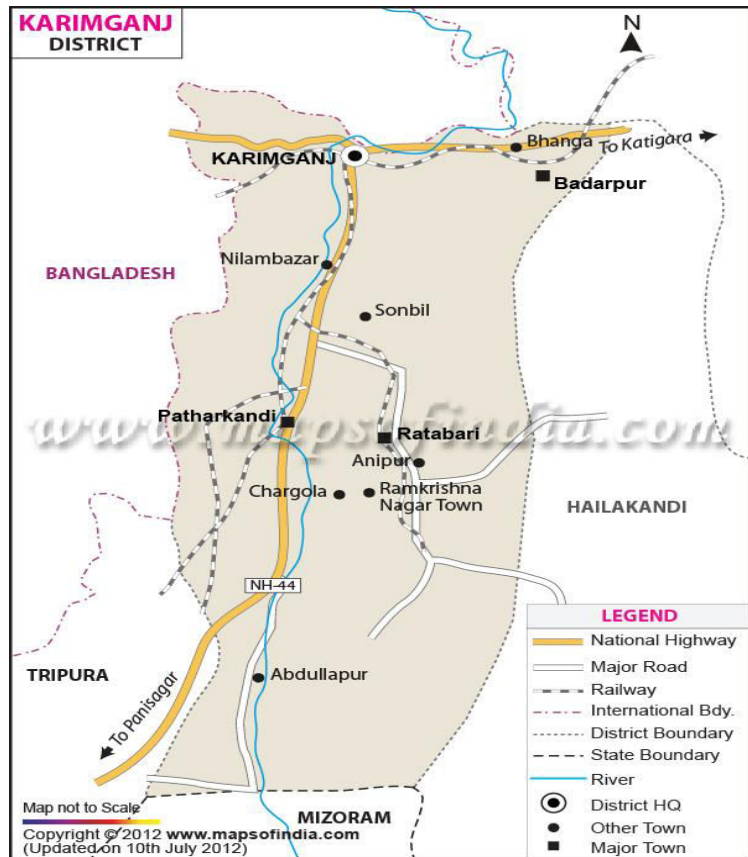
1.7. Time period: May-June, 2014

DISTRICT: KARIMGANJ

2. Demography:

The early history of present district of Karimganj, Assam, is hazy and obscure. With available source materials and evidences, it is difficult to construct a chronologically comprehensive account of early history of the region. Only a broad outline, with major gaps, can be attempted.

From the Nidhanpur copper inscriptions issued by King Bhaskarbarman, it is learned that the region has been within the Kamrupa Kingdom for about a hundred years since A.D. sixth century. The Aryanisation of the region under the leadership of the pioneer immigrant Brahmins with plough-based agriculture as economic basis had its beginning during this period. From the Kalapur copper plates issued by Samata Marundanatha, it is learned that in the 7th Century A.D., this region, along with foothills of North Cachar Hills had passed on to the Samatata Kingdom of the Eastern Bengal. Of course, there is no direct evidence to prove it. In the 10th Century A.D., King Srichandra of the renowned Chandra Dynasty of Eastern Bengal incorporated the entire region within his Vanga



Kingdom. During this period, the Chandrapura Matha or monastery, situated at Panchakhanda (8 miles From Karimganj town, now in Bangladesh), became a very reputed centre of learning. According to the renowned historian D.C. Sarkar, the Chandrapura Matha was the greatest centre of Hindu-learning in the entire Eastern India of the early period. From two Bhatera inscriptions of Govindakeshava Deva and Ishana Deva, it is learnt that there was an independent Srihatta Rajya in the 12th Century within which the entire Karimganj District along with a major portion of the Cachar plains were incorporated.

In 1785, the diwani of the Bangla Suba was taken over by the British East India Company and the District of Sylhet, of which Karimganj was a part, passed on to the British. However, up to 1786, the British could not establish their hegemony over the entire region. A local Zamindar, Radharam, brought under his administrative control, a vast region of Southern Karimganj, and local people started calling him Nawab Radharam. His blatant defiance of British authority brought the matters to a head, but Radharam survived two successive expeditions of the British contingents. Ultimately, a reinforced contingent succeeded in capturing him after defeating his forces. While he was being carried to Sylhet by the Company soldiers, Radharam reportedly

committed suicide. It is only with his fall in 1786 that the British could establish their complete authority in the region around Karimganj.

Assam's Surma Valley (now partly in Bangladesh) had Muslim-majority population. On the eve of partition, hectic activities intensified by the Muslim League as well Congress with the former having an edge. A referendum had been proposed for Sylhet District (now in Bangladesh). Mazumdar along with Basanta Kumar Das (then Home Minister of Assam) travelled throughout the valley organising the Congress and addressing meetings educating the masses about the outcome of partition on the basis of religion. On 20 February 1947, Moulvi Mazumdar inaugurated a convention – Assam Nationalist Muslim's Convention at Silchar. There after another big meeting was held at Silchar on 8 June 1947. Both the meetings, which were attended by a large section of Muslims paid dividend. He was also among the few who were instrumental in retaining the Barak Valley region of Assam, especially Karimganj with India. Mazumdar was the leader of the delegation that pleaded before the Radcliffe Commission that ensured that a part of Sylhet (now in Bangladesh) remains with India despite being Muslim-majority (present Karimganj district).

During the Bangladesh's war of liberation in 1970-71, he was in charge of relief-&-rehabilitation of the thousands of refugees who fled the then East Pakistan to Assam including Karimganj.

2.1. The Administrative System is divided into:

1. **Village:** 1130
2. **Block:** 7
 1. North Karimganj,
 2. South Karimganj,
 3. Badarpur,
 4. Patherkandi,
 5. Ramkrishna Nagar,
 6. Dullavcherra and
 7. Lowairpoa
3. **Sub-division:** 1
4. **Gram Panchayat:** 96
5. **Anchalik Panchayat:** 7
6. **Police Stations:** 6
 1. Karimganj,
 2. Badarpur,
 3. Ramkrishna Nagar,
 4. Patharkandi,
 5. Ratabari,
 6. Nilambazaar,
7. **No. of towns :** 3 (Karimganj, Badarpur, Badarpur Rly Town T.C)

2.2. Population Composition:

District	Total Population (Census, 2011) 1217002		Total urban population	Total SC population	Total ST population	Total Muslim population
Karimganj	Male	Female	(Census, 2011)	(Census, 2011)	(Census, 2011)	(Census, 2001)
	620722	596280	110257	157,890	1940	
No. of Villages	No. of Primary Schools		No. of Junior High Schools	No. of HS Schools		No. of BPHC
1130	1634		271	25 (1govt. +24 Privt.)		29
						5
No. Of CHC	No. of HH (Census, 2011)	Sex Ratio (Census, 2011)	Child Sex Ratio (Census, 2011)	Literacy Rate (%) (Census, 2011)	Female Literacy Rate (%) (Census, 2011)	
3	247714	963	969	79.72%	73.49%	

3. Major Vulnerabilities of Children in Karimganj:

Total population of Assam as per 2011 census is 31,169,272 of which male and female are 15,954,927 and 15,214,345 respectively, which is 3.41% of total population of India. In 2001, total population was 26,655,528 in which males were 13,777,037 while females were 12,878,491.

District	Year	Child Population (0-6 years)		% of child population	Child Sex Ratio
Karimganj		Boys	Girls		
	2001	90,283	87,126	17.60%	965
	2011	107,638	104,322	17.25%	969

In 2011 census, there were total 211,960 children under age of 0-6 years in Karimganj district. Of total 211,960 male and female were 107,638 and 104,322 respectively. Child Sex Ratio as per census 2011 was 969 compared to 965 of census 2001. In 2011, Children under 0-6 formed 17.25 percent of Karimganj district.

3.1. Health:

The Annual Health Survey 2012-13 data reveals that Crude Birth Rate (CBR) is 25.6 and Crude Death Rate is 7.0 in Karimganj district. The Infant Mortality Rate in Karimganj district is 65 (Male-61 and Female-69). Maternal Mortality Rate is 281¹. There are 29 Primary Health Centres, 217 Sub-Centres, 5 no. of Block Primary Health Centres, 3 no. of Community health centres and 6 no. of State Dispensaries in the districts. According to the data provided by the office of the Joint Director of Health, there is no data available pertaining to children affected with HIV/AIDS because children are not tested positive as the confirmation comes after 18 months, but there are 2 male and 4 female children within 0-1 year of age group whose mothers are tested positive in district.

¹Source: Annual Health Survey 2012-13 (2nd Updation), Office of Jt. Director of Health, Karimganj district

Mr. R.N. Das, Joint Director of Health highlighted some issues regarding health status of the district which are as follows:

- There are inadequate child specialist in the district;
- Most of the PHCs and BPHCs are running without permanent doctors;
- The ratio of institutional delivery and non institutional delivery is 50:50;
- Due to poor communication and transportation system the rural people are deprived from proper health services;
- Health infrastructure is good and available in the district but it should be functional and need to be strengthened.

3.2. Education:

According to 2011 Census, the literacy rate in Assam is 73.18 (Male 78.81 and Female 67.27) and the corresponding figure in Karimganj district is 79.72% which shows better condition than the state average. If things are looked out at gender wise distribution, male and female literacy rates are 85.70% and 73.49% respectively in the district. According to the data available from Education Department, there are 1634 numbers of Primary Schools, 271 numbers of Junior High Schools, 51 numbers of High Schools in the district. There are 25 numbers of Higher Secondary schools of which 1 is government run rest are private schools in the district. In Karimganj, the gross enrolment ratio of class I- VIII is 79.17%. Besides this the drop out ratio of class I-VIII is 7.49%. According to the education department gender wise distribution of boys and girls dropout rates from class I to Class VIII are as follows:

Class	Dropout rates	
	Boys	Girls
Class I	5.70%	4.18%
Class II	4.88%	4.18%
Class III	5.75%	3.50%
Class IV	5.73%	2.46%
Class V	24.97%	18.11%
Class VI-VIII	8.67%	6.26%

Residential Special Training Centre (RSTC):

According to Education department there are total seven numbers of Residential Special Training Centres sanctioned in the district. Presently, three numbers of RSTC are functional.

SSA Running Bridge Course Centre:

There are 35 Bridge Course Centres in the district run by SSA.

Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya (KGBV):

There was one Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya at Lowairpoa block in the district catering SC/ST/OBC/Minority/Drop-out/never attended school among the age group of 10-14 years for 50 children. However, according to DPO, SSA it is not properly functioning right now.

3.3. Children in ICDS:

Integrated Child Development Scheme (ICDS) is implemented in Karimganj district through 7 projects. There are total 125690 children covered under the project of which 41084 are boys and 84606 are girls. Along with pre-school education, other components of ICDS are being catered to the children through 1570 Anganwadi Centres. The project is run by 4 numbers of Child Development Project Officers, 32 numbers of supervisors and 1526 numbers of Anganwadi Workers (AWWs). The needs of the adolescent girls, however, remain largely unaddressed through ICDS.

Present Status of ICDS:

Category	Sanctioned	In Position
No. of ICDS Projects	7	7
No. of CDPOs	7	4
No. of Supervisors	47	32
No. of AWCs	1574	1570
No. of AWWs	1574	1526
No. of AWHs	1574	1560

Issues discussed in Focused Group Discussion (FGD) with ICDS Workers at South Karimganj Block:

Block: South Karimganj Block

Date: 22.05.2014

Agenda of Discussion: Contribution of ICDS to Ensure Overall Child Protection Issues

Name of the Members: Joytilekha Dutta (CDPO), Isheetta Deb, Baby Sen, Sikha Paul, Shabana Sultana Tapadan, Tulfa Begam Choashy, Priti Rani Roy, Anima Khatun, Gopa Biswas, Rabaya Begam, Sankari Namasundra

Discussion:

- According to Smt. Joytilekha Dutta, CDPO of South Karimganj Block there are 326 numbers of ICDS centres in the block but due to unavailability of transportation system centres situated in remote areas are hardly covered by her staffs. Here she pointed out that improper communication system is a major constrains for her workers to provide services catered under ICDS;
- It is a fact that there are only 6 supervisors in place to manage all 326 centres although there are provisions for 11 number of supervisors within the block;
- According to one of the Centre President, delay in interview process for selection of AWW causing irregularity of services under ICDS;
- SNP have been suspended due to irregular fund-flow since last 2 months in almost all centres reported by numbers of Supervisors;
- As per our observation parents are not aware of the services of ICDS;
- According to CDPO, infrastructural development would enhance the vigilance on functioning of ICDS in remote parts of the block as well the districts;

- Referral services are not available as of now;
- Workers are not given proper field information because their level of education and understanding is very poor;
- 50% of workers are untrained;
- According to majority of the ICDS functionaries Cherakuri GP, Manasangan GP, Megna I,II, Rupargul, Taltala II, Khagai III etc. Are most vulnerable in terms of child protection issues;
- Although the average age of marriage for girls is around 18 yrs some marriages solemnises below the of 18 in some of the remote areas specially in minority and SC community;

3.4. Child Labour:

As per the census report of 2001, Assam has 3, 51, 416 child labourers of 5-14 years age group. Incidentally, the number in the whole country counted to the tune of 1.26 crore as per that census. Most of the children were engaged in domestic help, hotel, Dhabas sector etc. Apart from this, many child labourers were identified in the urban areas that were mostly migrated from other districts in Assam. Most of the families employ children for domestic help. In all the cases, the children were denied access to education, recreation, cultural practices and participation in play activities. To combat the problem, a strong coordination between labour department, Social Welfare Department, Education Department and Health Department of the district administration is required.

In terms of existence of child labours in Karimganj district there are some specific trades like tea stalls, helper in private transport, Dhabas, stone crashing units, brick kilns etc. In addition to that particularly, in urban areas there are few domestic child labours specially girls. The Labour Inspector reported that due to poor economic condition the parents engage their children in work. He also informed that as per the provision of the act they are taking action against the employer. According to Labour Inspector, Karimganj district till date 35 numbers of employers of child labours have been prosecuted in Hon'ble court of Chief Judicial Magistrate, Karimganj of which 2 numbers of cases have been disposed. He also highlighted that poverty, lack of education, lack of awareness and its consequences play pivotal role and push families to engage their children as child labourer in different occupations for their livelihood.

3.5. Child Marriage:

In Assam, the median age at first marriage for boys is 26.9 and for girls the corresponding figure is 20.8 (DLHS, 2007). The 2001 Census of India showed that 19.22% of them were married off between the ages of 10 to 19 years in Assam. It is found that percentage of child marriage is highest in Dhubri District (11.1%), followed by Goalpara (10.1%), Bongaigaon (9.8%) and Barpeta (9.7%) districts in lower Assam, Tinsukia (9.7%) in upper Assam and Morigaon (9.6%) and Kamrup (9.5%) districts in central Assam. Prevalence of child marriage is lowest in NC Hills (6.9%), followed by Cachar (7.5%), Hailakandi (7.6%) and Karimganj (7.9%) districts in south Assam. This trend portrays a similarity in districts that are geographically situated near one another, which contributes significantly either to the practice or to prevention of child marriage in the district.

According to district officials, Child Marriage is not very prevalent in the district. But in tea garden, minority and SC community there are tendencies of early marriages.

Issues discussed in Focused Group Discussion (FGD) with Community and PRI members:

Venue: Patharkandi GP

Date: 28.05.2014

Agenda Of Discussions: Status Of Overall Child Protection Issues

Name Of The Members:

Rima Nath Laskar, Rakhi Das, Bamdana Deb, Phool Rani Sinha, Himani Das, Gesmani Begam, Chapala Sinha, Leela Goala, Nazrul Islam, Piyush Kumar Deb, Pulak Some, Biman Kanti Malakar, Ajoy Malakar, Rafiuf Haque

Discussions:

- According to vice president of Patharkandi GP, there is some mixed community within Patharkandi GP where apart from hindus two manipuri communities mete & bisnupriya coexists in Singari village;
- Education level among girls is good in almost all villages under Patharkandi GP;
- As mentioned earlier many a ICDS centres are closed for the last three months due to poor infrastructure and improper care by ICDS workers;
- In this GP majority of people are mainly engaged in agricultural field;
- There are instances of migration from villages under this GP to Meghalaya, Bangalore, Guwahati, Gujarat, Dimapur etc;
- As per the data provided by local govt. and community leaders malfunctioning of government schools is a major constrains in order to provide basic education to the children. Most of the children from this area go to private schools for higher education;
- Less number of teachers is a big problem in schools;
- Ms. Chapala Sinha, Anganwadi worker from Singari village highlighted that there are instances like teachers avoid their duties by appointing some local person as a proxy teacher with exchange of small amount of money so that they should not travel long distance to attend their regular duty;
- No survey on dropout students has yet been done by school department reported by Ms. Leela Goala, Supervisor, ICDS project, Patharkandi block;
- Although there is a model hospital in Patharkandi block but it is almost non functional in terms of getting health services apart from some stipulated health programmes conducted by NRHM. Trainee doctors have limitations to address overall health hazards;
- According to one of the trainee doctors skin diseases and water borne diseases are common in the children of this area;
- According to Mr. Piyush Kumar Dey, NGO representative scarcity of drinking water is major concern of this block;
- Level of accessibility towards the services of police is quite unreachable by general people;

3.6. Children Affected by Natural Disaster:

Assam falls under the seismic zone-V which indicates risk of earthquake with high magnitude. In this regard, a minimum level of awareness about preparedness of management of any sort of disaster apart from disaster resilient construction of school building and incorporating course-content on disaster preparedness in school curriculum/ syllabus creating awareness and developing impact of such calamities to great extent in this backdrop.

In Karimganj, flood is a recurring disaster which affects the men and infrastructure both in a massive scale every year. A large part of the district gets inundated during monsoon and causes a great deal of misery to the people especially the women and children.

Mr. Iqbal Hussein Laskar, Programme Officer, District Disaster Management Authority, Karimganj has given a statistics regarding flood prone areas. Those are as follows:

- The geographical area of the district is 1809 sq.km of which 519.68 sq. Km (28.72%) is a flood hazards area;
- Out of 943 villages almost 195 villages are mostly affected during flood;

Flood Affected Villages under the Different Revenue Circle:

Revenue Circle	No. of Villages
Ramkrishna Nagar	39
Badarpur	30
Nilambazar	65
Patharkandi	11
Karimganj	43

According to Mr. I.H. Laskar, Programme officer, District Disaster Management Authority they prepare a list of all children along with their parents before disaster with the help of ICDS, Health and Education department. So that during disaster they can easily find out or trace out the children for relief.

3.7. Child Abuse:

In the district of Karimganj, 85 cases of Kidnapping and Abduction (u/s 363-369, 371-373 IPC) and 32 cases of rape (u/s 376IPC) are reported in NCRB, 2012. The following table shows the total crimes committed in the district:

Total Cognizable Crimes (IPC) committed in Karimganj District, Assam in 2012

Sl. No	Crime Heads	2012
1	Murder (Sec. 302)	36
2	Attempt to commit Murder (Sec. 307)	22
3	CH not amounting to Murder (Sec. 304, 308)	00
4	Rape (Sec. 376)	32

Sl. No	Crime Heads		2012
5	Kidnapping & Abduction (Sec. 363 - 369, 371 - 373)	Of Women & Girls	85
		Of Others	00
6	Dacoity (Sec. 395 - 398)		15
7	Preparation & Assembly for Dacoity (Sec. 399 - 402)		00
8	Robbery (392 - 394, 397, 398)		09
9	Burglary (sec. 449 - 452, 454, 455, 457 - 460)		122
10	Theft (sec. 379 - 382)	Auto Theft	23
		Other Theft	174
11	Riots (Sec. 143 - 145, 147 - 151, 153, 153A, 153B, 157, 158, 160)		59
12	Criminal Breach of Trust (Sec. 406 - 409)		31
13	Cheating (Sec. 419, 420)		29
14	Counterfeiting (Sec. 231 - 254, 489A, 489D)		02
15	Arson (Sec. 435, 436, 438)		21
16	Hurt (Sec. 323 - 333, 335 - 338)		106
17	Dowry Deaths (Sec. 304B)		11
18	Assault on Women with intent to Outrage her modesty (Sec. 354)		04
19	Insult to the modesty of Women (Sec. 509)		00
20	Cruelty by Husband & Relatives (Sec. 498A)		262
21	Importation of Girls (Sec. 366B)		00
22	Causing Death by Negligence (Sec. 304 A)		38
23	Other IPC Crimes		1129
	Total		2210

4. Discussions with different stakeholders regarding the situation as well as the vulnerability of children at Block Level:

As per our discussion with the representatives of different line departments at District level, we conducted various FGDs in seven blocks of Karimganj district. It was a mixed group at block offices where we interacted with BDO, PRI members, ICDS functionaries, teachers, community leaders in terms of overall child protection scenario within the block.

Some of the major findings through discussions and observations are as follows:

4.1. South Karimganj Block:

- As per our interactions and observations with block level stake holders it came out that they are not aware of the Integrated Child Protection Scheme (ICPS) and its effective functioning in the block;
- BLCPC is yet to be formed in this block although notification has been sent by DCPO to CDPO;
- There is no awareness about Block Level Child Protection Committee within the community as well as the implementing agencies like PRI & other stake holders;

- Scarcity of drinking water and malnourishment is a major concern in the block due to unavailability of adequate drinking water people specially children suffer a lot;
- Most of the girls below the age of 18 years are malnourished, also some boys whose actual age is around 15 years they look like boys aged around 8 years or 9 years;
- Lack of proper transportation system in remote areas is a major concern in this block;
- According to the GP member functioning of ICDS is not up to the mark. One of the PRI members highlighted that children under age group of 0-6 years are hardly taken care of in terms of Supplementary Nutrition;
- According to PRI members, education system is very poor in the block especially in case of schools. The teachers do not maintain the scheduled school timing;
- School dropout is also very remarkable issue in the block;
- Bagmari is one of the most vulnerable GP in terms of Child marriage, Child Labour reported by Block Development Officer, South Karimganj block;

4.2. Badarpur Block:

- Badarpur block is consisting of 12 GPs;
- Here also in case of level of awareness regarding ICPS, DCPU, CWC, JJB among the block officials and other workers is very low;
- In course of our interactions with various community members and other stake holders within the block it has been come out that malnutrition, child marriage, child labour, lack of pure drinking water, lack of transportation are the major issues thwarting into overall child protection mechanisms;
- Umarpur, Nayagram and Alogram are child marriage prone areas of this block reported by Ms. Sukla Roy, Supervisor, ICDS project;
- According to Mr. Nripati Raju Das, PRI member 3 child labours have been rescued from Dalgram & Nayagram village under Umarpur G.P;
- Most of the ICDS centers are out of functions for nearly two months due to unavailability of food grains;
- Education rate among girls are low in this block as per our observation;
- Child labour, child domestic workers, child migration are seen in Bijaynagar Surgul Village under Hasanpur G.P;
- General concept of the parents of the children in Malua Sreegur G.P is that no need to educate their daughters. Lack of awareness regarding RtE, 2009 is being observed here;
- Harinathi village under Enlabazar GP is vulnerable in terms of mal nutrition reported by Extension officer, Badarpur block;
- As per survey report of implementation of WIF programme school dropout rate is high in the block;
- The rate of attendance is less due to unavailability of food supply in ICDS centres;
- Extension Officer of Badarpur block highlighted that the vulnerable places and vulnerability status of the block like: poverty, malnutrition, improper sanitation, scarcity of drinking water, lack of communication are the major problem of the block;
- The average education rate among the girls are class IX - X;
- Chargulo Gharamara G.P, Badarpur Block is near Bangladesh border, some families who have land in Bangladesh go for work by showing their gate pass and after completing their

agricultural work they come back home. Families having children below 10 years faces major problem in this process and vulnerability of such children is major concern;

4.3. North Karimganj Block:

- According to some supervisors of ICDS project there is a procedural lacuna in providing utilization certificate and unless and until the previous UC is submitted no further fund is allocated for SNP thus the children suffered and deprived;
- Anganwadi workers face problem with bank account system as it is jointly operated by ward members of concerned centres;
- Child trafficking is not prominent in this block;
- School dropout rate is prevalent;
- Although Riyang Community do not deploy their children as child labour but expect this majority of children from other community as child labour due to poverty;
- Children are engage in seasonal work (collection of bottle nut, paddy field, Coal trade etc.). They are mostly engaged for the month of November to January;
- As per our observation and information disseminated by locals people are mainly dependent on agriculture here;
- Child domestic labour is seen in this block though most of the household claimed the children are relative to them and they also bear the expenses of their study;
- Madhupur, Promodnagar, Krishnapur, Rampur Khasipanji are the 4 tea garden areas in this block mostly tea tribes and SC populated but they have no such practice of child marriages;
- No separate toilet facility among the boys and girls is seen in the schools;
- Most of the G.Ps are flood prone like Laxmi Bazar, Panighat, Sadarshi, North Karimganj, Akbarpur, Mahesh Gram, Purahuria, Sutarkandi Kuri Khala, Latu Sajpur, Puthu Surigram, Gandhai & Brambhansashan reported by the Extension Officer, North Karimkanj;
- Sutarkandi Kurikhala GP is shared the international border with Bangladesh;

4.4. Patharkandi Block:

- One of the N.G.O persons Mr. Pijush Kr. Dey pointed out that the Child marriage, Malnutrition are the major issue in Putni and Medni tea estate in this block. Apart from that scarcity of drinking water prevailing in the block;
- According to PRI members most of the children are not covered under immunization process as the majority of the areas of the block situated remotely and hardly accessed by any Govt. agencies;
- Dropout rates are high in Narayanpur, Khudail Bari, Ratanpur villages under Patharkandi Block;
- Awareness level regarding education is very low among the village people reported by AWW, Patharkandi block;
- Vulnerable villages in terms of ill health, poor education, low electrification etc. under Burunga G.P are Manikpara(S.C part), West Katabari (S.C part), Kalkali (S.C part), Bartal (Minority), South Keuti (Minority), Hatirkul, Duhalia-I & IV;
- One new model hospital has been constructed but yet to be fully functional;
- Child marriage happens particularly in S.C, S.T, Minority community in tea garden areas;

- Child labours are engaged in brick kiln industry, Bus stand, stone crashing units, domestic labour etc.
- Lack of awareness about personal hygiene. Most of the village people go for open defecation;

4.5. Lowairpoa Block:

- According to PRI member Mr. Bijoy Kundu high schools are situated in more than 5 km radius distance;
- Child labour is prevailing in tea garden area under Bhagan G.P;
- According to Ms. Srabani Kar, Supervisor, ICDS project, children suffers from low vision as they are to study in candle light and local lampho (Hariken) in Chankhira T.E;
- Majority of the residents highlighted that it is a flood prone block;
- According to Ms. Kamalabati Rabidas, A.P.P, Lowairpoa this block is adjuscent to the borders of Tripura, Mizoram and international border of Bangladesh;
- Public transport is very inadequate even in northern part of the block children go to school in the adjacent area of Tripura as they have no high schools within their area;
- Children go to Bangalore, Dimapur, Keralia (Meghalaya) as migrant labour;
- There are Stone crashing unit in Chankhira and Baithayakhan area and child labours are engaged here reported by Mr. Pulak Roy, Vice President, AP, Lowairpoa block;
- Kukijal, Medli and Balipipra are most vulnerable in terms of overall child protection scenario;
- More than half of the populations of the block go for open defecation;
- According to block coordinator malaria and diarrhea are the common diseases among the children during flood;
- Dengarbon, Hatikhera, Chankhira are the most flood affected areas of the block;
- Ferry service is very risky and alarming in this block. During flood time crossing the river, every year one or two children fall into the river from the boat and succumb to death;
- There are inadequacy of Health Sub Centres reported by Ms. Aruna Chowhan, Supervisor, ICDS project;

4.6. Ramkrishna Nagar Block:

- Poor transportation, Scarcity of drinking water, electricity problem are three major problems in the block;
- Gangari GP, Anandapur G.P, Ramkrishna Nagar GP are the vulnerable GP in terms of child protection;
- During our course of visit to this block child Labur have been found in Nayatila GP, R.K. Nagar GP, Bhutucharra, Rangpur, Durgapur G.P and Ichhagura Village although majority of the stakeholders expressed that it is a common phenomena of the district;
- Average education among girls is class VII in the block;
- Child marriage is found in Muslim Community and Schedule Caste people under Hindu community at Rangpur-Balibond Village under Vairabnagar GP;
- School Dropout is found in Anandapur GP this block;

- Ms. Rama Sutradhar, AP President, Ramkrishna Nagar block highlighted that there are provisions for ICDS centres but due to lack of proper initiatives those are yet to be functional;

4.7. Dullavcherra Block:

- Ms Pratima Deb, Supervisor, ICDS project pointed out that there is extremist problem in Cheragi G.P in this block;
- Incidence of Child marriages is common in Singlachora G.P, Khachora Village under Bihaidala GP. Singlachora T.E. under Singlachore GP. These areas are also backward in terms of status of education of the children;
- Children are migrated from Patiala GP to Maghalaya for job. Apart from this children from age group of 16years to 17 years also migrated from Chargola G.P to Bangalore, Kashmir looking for a job;
- Due to stony nature of soil people do not fully depend upon agriculture and so migration rate is higher over here in comparison to other blocks;
- Sonaipur G.P, Paldoor G.P, Anipur G.P are also vulnerable in terms of child protection;
- Teachers are inadequate in schools in Laxminagar village under R.K.Nagar GP;
- There is arsenic water in some parts of Dullavcherra Block. Due to scarcity of drinking water children are suffering from Hepatitis B reported by Mr. Maiuddin Chowdhury, AP president of this block;

5. Existing Child Protection Mechanisms:

5.1. Institutional Services:

There is no institutional care facility for children both boys and girls in Karimganj district. Only one Children's Home for boys at Silchar run by Wodwichee covers the three districts of Barak Valley and Dima Hassao district.

Wodwichee Children's Home for boys, Silchar:

Children's Home for boys, Silchar run by Wodwichee under the supervision and control of the State Child Protection Society, Assam. It is a NGO run home in the Cachar district. It was established for the children in the year 1993 to ensure the child protection and improvement of the situation of children. It is a Children Home under JJ Act, 2000. It is a residential institution and a reception centre that provides care, protection, training and rehabilitation of the children in need of care and protection. It also imparts social education (including domestic science and hygiene), extracurricular activities for Children, formal literacy classes, academics, music and some other recreational activities. The capacity of the institution is 25 and present strength is 20. Total 18 no of children go to outside school for studying.

Although it is a Children Home but sometime the home authority keep some JCL boys on request of Principal Magistrate, Juvenile Justice Board reported by Superintendent of Home.

5.2. Child Welfare Committee:

The CWC of Karimganj district has been functioning since 2007 and sits in the premises of the District Child Protection Unit (DCPU) office. The Chairperson Dr. Kamal Uddin Ahamed

reported that CWC, since inception has been playing a positive role to ensure child rights and makes effort to generate awareness on the role of the CWC to deal with the Child in Need of Care and Protection (CNCP) and children at risk.

The contact details of the members of CWC:

Sl. No.	Name	Designation	Contact No.
1	Dr. Kamal Uddin Ahmed	Chair Person	9435374447
2	Sri Subhas Ranjan Das	Member	9435503956
3	Dr. Kinkar Lal Paul	Member	9435075838
4	Smt. Chandra Dey	Member	9854288528
5	Smt. Mahasweta Chakraborty	Member	9401323874

The committee is sitting once in a week i.e. Tuesday from 12 noon to 3 p.m. The CWC of Karimganj is running by five persons viz: chair person and four members. According to the chairperson, the children produced before the committee mostly belong to Muslim community. The children are mostly produced by the social worker. The average age group of the children produced before CWC is between 2 years to 16 years. As per record of the CWC, 3 children placed in Children's home. There is no such pending case in CWC. With the help of the social worker under DCPS traces the family within 1 day. According to the Chairperson of CWC, lack of awareness about CWC is a major problem for proper functioning of CWC.

The CWC expresses their resentment about the poor budgetary allocation. The functional liaison between SJPU and CWC is not up to the mark. According to the Chairperson and member of the committee, linkages need to be strengthened with all concerned departments specially, health, education, police, Social welfare department, labour department with CWC.

Gaps:

- Non availability of SAA in the district;
- There is no CHILDLINE service in the district;
- Lack of awareness on child protection issues;
- Lack of NGOs which can effectively deal with child related issues;
- Absence of children's homes in the district;
- Lack of infrastructure & other financial/administrative support;
- Overall lack of awareness of the community, NGOs and other stakeholders about the role of CWC.

5.3. Juvenile Justice Board:

Juvenile Justice Board of Karimganj district sits twice in a week in the premises of the District Child Protection Unit (DCPU) office from 11 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. The contact details of the members of JJB:

Sl. No.	Name	Designation	Contact No.
1	Mr. Kumud Ch. Boro	Principal Magistrate	9435732395
2	Ms. Gita Mukherjee	Social Worker	9435075581
3	Mr. Dipankar Ghosh	Social Worker	9435075662

According to JJB member, the children who mostly produce before to JJB belong to poor families. The average age of the children is 10-16 years. As per data given by JJB, they dealt with 57 cases during last year and 41 no. of cases are pending till date, 29 children have been granted bail in the last 12 months. The children are mostly produced before the JJB by police.

In an interview with Mr. K.C. Bora, Principal Magistrate of JJB Karimganj, it is informed that most of the children committed petty offences and they released the child very shortly. But sometimes it is found that there are instances of cognizable offences like Rape, Murder, attempt to murder etc. He also pointed out that lack of education, lack of awareness and poor family back ground are the major factors responsible for crime related activities committed by children.

5.4. Special Juvenile Police Unit:

According to Additional Superintendent of Police, Karimganj district Special Juvenile Police Unit (SJPU) has been formed but not yet functional due to shortage of manpower in police.

5.5. Alternative Non-Institutional Care:

Alternative care stresses primarily in strengthening vulnerable families with a view to keeping the child with his or her family. It should take full account of the desirability, in principle, of maintaining the child as close as possible to his/her habitual place of residence, in order to facilitate contact and potential reintegration with his/her family and to minimize disruption of his/her educational, cultural and social life.

There is no Specialized Adoption Agency in the district. But, Nivedita Nari Sangstha, Silchar is a Specialized Adoption Agency (SAA) working for three districts of Barak Valley. This SAA provides the "In country" adoption facility. It was established in the year 1996. The sanctioned capacity of the institution is 10. Presently, 4 numbers of children (1 boy and 3 girls of which 1 CWSN) are there for adoption. In 2011-2012, 7 numbers of children were placed in In-Country Adoption and 25 numbers of children given in Foster care so far.

In absence of advocacy and awareness programmes in districts, community people are either ignorant about the meaning and concept of various forms of non-institutional alternative care or has a wrong information. In the absence of proper vigilance, abandoned newborn babies from health care facilities like hospitals, nursing homes etc are often lost or stolen and thereafter illegally sold at a high price to childless couple. Prolonged process, especially the legal procedure add additional barriers, families often back off due to the fear of the process, the organisation reported.

5.6. CHILDLINE Services:

CHILDLINE India Foundation is the national nodal agency for initiation & monitoring of CHILDLINE across cities established by the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment in May, 1999. Presently it is under the aegis of Ministry of Women and Child Development. CHILDLINE 1098 is a national 24-hour free, emergency telephone and outreach service for

children in need of care and protection. There is no CHILDLINE in Karimganj district. Deshabandhu Club is working as a collaborative organization of Cachar district.

5.7. District Child Protection Committee (DCPC) in Karimganj, Assam:

DCPU has been formed in Karimganj district on 12.07.2010. Every district should have a District Child Protection Committee (DCPC) under the Chairpersonship of the Chairperson, Zila Parishad to monitor the implementation of ICPS. The Deputy Commissioner is the Chairperson of the DCPC. The DCPC should coordinate and implement all the rights of children and ensure child protection activities at district level.

The committee is very new in the district. But, some posts are still vacant in DCPC. Although according to DCPO and other staff of DCPC, there was two DCPC meeting in 2013. District Child Protection Officer (DCPO) took an initiative to form Block Level Child Protection Committee (BLPCP).

The Structure of the DCPC:

Sl No.	Name/Designation	Status
1	Deputy Commissioner	Chairperson
2	Additional Deputy Commissioner (Dev)	Vice- Chairperson
3	District Child Protection Officer	Member Convener
4	Superintendent of Police	Member
5	Joint Director of Health Services	Member
6	Project Director, DRDA	Member
7	Inspector of Schools	Member
8	District Elementary Education Officer (DEEO)	Member
9	District Mission Coordinator of Sarva Shiksha Abhijan	Member
10	Chairperson, CWC	Member
11	Principal Magistrate, JJB	Member
12	Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Zilla Parisad	Member
13	Dr. Abul Hussain, Child Specialist, Civil Hospital	Member
14	Dipankar Ghosh, President ,SWORUWAYAT NGO, Karimganj	Member

6. Information from primary sources:

Seven blocks (South Karimganj, North Karimganj, Badarpur, Ramkrishna Nagar, Lowairpoa, Patharkandi, Dullavcherra) of Karimganj district were taken up for collection of data on overall child protection issues. Two GPs were selected out of each of those seven blocks and three vulnerable villages under each GP. In order to get primary data on the existing issues of child protection mechanism, parents who have children aged between 0-18 years staying with them and community leaders were taken as the sample of the survey.

The data was collected in the following way:

- i. Semi -structured questionnaire based on both quantitative and qualitative matrix to capture all relevant information about the overall child protection scenario within the District;
- ii. Individual interviews & FGDs with the Government functionaries like District level officials, Block Development Officers, Child Development Project Officer, Supervisor, Anganwadi workers, Teachers of primary schools;
- iii. Focus group discussion with the mothers, PRI members to secure information about the accessibility of support services and basic awareness about the child protection mechanism;
- iv. Interview with key informants like:
 - Deputy Commissioner of Karimganj,
 - Principal Magistrate, JJB,
 - Joint Director of Health,
 - Chairperson, CWC,
 - Additional Superintendent of Police,

The primary data was collected in order to assess the existing service delivery mechanism in terms of overall child protection issues and to identify most vulnerable areas of the seven blocks of the district. Analysing the present gaps the vulnerable areas are as follows:

CP Issues	Vulnerable Blocks	Vulnerable GPs	Vulnerable Villages
Child Labour, School Dropout, Child Marriage	Lowairpoa Block, Duallav Cherra, Ramkrishna Nagar, Patharkandi, Badarpur	Bagan GP, Dengarbond GP, Balipipla GP, Kukitol GP, Putni GP, Medly GP; Cheragi GP, Chorgula GP, Kazirbazar GP; Sonaipur G.P, Paldoor G.P, Anipur G.P, Chargola G.P; Gangari GP, Anandapur G.P, Ramkrishna Nagar GP;	Madhupur, Promodnagar, Krishnapur, Rampur Khasipanja T.E.; Singari, Patharkandi, Rajor Gaon, Putni, Piplagoal T.E; Chankhira L.P. Tilla, Medly, Ghatudharam Part II, Lamajur; Dakshinkul, Kalapani, Kalinagar, Nayatilla

7. Major Gaps:

- No Observation Home and Children's Home for JCL and CNCP respectively under JJ Act in the district;
- There is no SAA working in the districts seems inadequate to facilitate non-institutional care facilities for children under ICPS;
- Poor ICDS services is a major concern of the district;
- Education system is very poor in rural areas;
- Recruitment of staff in DCPU;
- The nearest children home is at Silchar run by Wodwichee cater to three district of Barak Valley with a capacity of 25 children only. Hence, the poor guardian, especially who live in remote areas find it quite difficult to keep contact with their children;
- There is no Shelter Home for boys or girls, where the rescued children can be placed for immediate care and support;

- There is no convergence among various lying departments to consolidate the issues pertaining to protection of children under JJA. Specially, Police, PRI, Labour department need to be strengthen to cater to services under ICPS;
- Overall lack of awareness of the community, NGOs and other stakeholders about the role and responsibilities of the Juvenile Justice System and ICPS;
- There is no CHILDLINE in the district;
- People's knowledge about various Government schemes/programmes like self-employment, wage employment, housing etc. is quite poor;
- There is lack of intervention and protection programme for the child labour, migrant children, CDWs etc;
- There is hardly any NGO working in the field of Child Protection;
- Lack of Crèche facilities in the district;
- Non-availability of Open Shelter in the district;

8. Plan of Action:

A. Proposals for New Projects for 2014-15:

Sl. No.	Name of Projects	Unit	Target Group	Place	Capacity	Proposed Budget
1	Children home for Girls	1	CNCP (Girls)	Badarpur	50 (10 children for Special Need)	As per referred budget under ICPS
2	Observation & Special home for Boys	1	JCL (Boys)	District HQ	25+25 (10 children for Special Need)	
3	SAA (DCPU should complete the process for identification of the NGO)	1	CNCP	District HQ	10	
4	CHILDLINE	1	CNCP	District HQ		

B. Plan for Training & Capacity Building:

Sl. No.	Major theme of Training	Contents	Place (Mention Area)	Target Group	No. of Participants	No of training/ Duration	Methodology	Expected Outcome	Budget
1	District level capacity building on overall child protection mechanism	JJA, ICPS, POCSO, ITPA, CLPRA, PCMA	District Head quarter	Police CWC JJB DCPU CHILDLINE SAA NGOs	50x4= 200	4 One day	Lecture Audio-Visual Participatory	Better understanding of child protection mechanism and smooth execution of the same	As per referred budget under ICPS
2	Block Level capacity building on overall child protection mechanism	Child rights, Combating mechanism of child trafficking, child	South Karimganj Block, North Karimganj Block, Badarpur	PRI ICDS ASHA Educational Volunteers SHGs	75x7x2= 1050	One day X 2 unit	Lecture Audio-Visual Participatory Campaign TFD	Generate awareness on overall child protection issues & smooth	As per referred budget under ICPS

Sl. No.	Major theme of Training	Contents	Place (Mention Area)	Target Group	No. of Participants	No of training/ Duration	Methodology	Expected Outcome	Budget
		marriage & child labour under ICPS and JJA	Block, Patharkandi Block, Lowairpoa Block, Ramkrishna Nagar Block, Dullavcherra Block	NGOs				functioning of BLCPC & VLCPC	

C. Plan for Advocacy, Awareness, Campaign & Sensitization:

Sl. No.	Proposed Activity	Place (Mention Area)	No. of Unit	Methodology	Expected Outcome	Budget
1	Preparation of IEC materials for awareness campaign	South Karimganj Block, North Karimganj Block, Badarpur Block, Patharkandi Block, Lowairpoa Block, Ramkrishna Nagar Block, Dullavcherra Block	7	DCPU shall negotiate with SCPS to identify concerned institutions	Awareness on Child Protection issues would be enhanced among community	As per referred budget under ICPS
2	Campaign on Alternative care	South Karimganj Block, North Karimganj Block, Badarpur Block, Patharkandi Block, Lowairpoa Block, Ramkrishna Nagar Block, Dullavcherra Block	2 X 7 blocks	Lecture Audio-Visual Participatory TFD Distributing Posters	Clear understanding of adoption process will be generated among community along with knowledge about sponsorship, foster care and aftercare	As per referred budget under ICPS
3	Campaign against child labour	Badarpur block,	2 X 5	Lecture	Would ensure	As per referred

Sl. No.	Proposed Activity	Place (Mention Area)	No. of Unit	Methodology	Expected Outcome	Budget
		Patharkandi block, Lowairpoa block, Ramkrishna Nagar block and Dullavcherra Block	blocks	Audio-Visual Participatory TFD Distributing Posters, Rally	protection and support to all child labour for safe rescue, effective rehabilitation and sustainable reintegration and would reduce the number of child labour in the district.	budget under ICPS
4	Special campaign on child marriage to be undertaken in minority belts and areas dominated by the tea tribes	Madhupur, Promodnagar, Krishnapur, Rampur Khasipanji under North Karimganj Block; Putni, Medly under Lowairpoa Block	2 X 2 blocks	Lecture Audio-Visual Participatory TFD Distributing Posters, Rally	Would reduce the number of child marriage cases in concerned areas.	As per referred budget under ICPS
5	Formation of Block level Child Protection Committee at five blocks of the district	South Karimganj Block, North Karimganj Block, Badarpur Block, Patharkandi Block, Lowairpoa Block, Ramkrishna Nagar Block, Dullavcherra Block	7	DCPU shall negotiate with Block administration	Smooth operation of DCPU	
6	Formation of Village level Child Protection Committee in most vulnerable villages			DCPU shall negotiate with PRI	Smooth operation of DCPU	

D. Plan for survey/assessment

Sl. No.	Proposed Activity	Place (Mention Area)	No. of Unit	Methodology	Expected Outcome	Budget
1	Conducting Survey on Child labour	District level	1	Framing Proposal in consultation with SCPS & Labour Dept.	Clear perception of the prevailing situation of child labour in the district	As per referred budget under ICPS
2	Conducting Survey on school dropout children	District level	1	Framing Proposal in consultation with SCPS & SSA.	Arresting gaps in service delivery approach	As per referred budget under ICPS

Budget: Annexed