

Minutes of consultative meeting of representatives of ` Association of Seed Industries` and MV Foundation against child Labour.

(Date : 7-9-2003, Venue: SERP office , Hyderabad)

A consultative meeting of the representatives of ` Association of Seed Industries` and MV Foundation to discuss the issue of child labour and work out an action plan for total elimination of child labour in the seed production activities was held on 7-9-2003 at Society for Elimination of Rural Poverty Office (SERP), Hyderabad. This meeting was preceded by a one-day field exposure visit of the representatives of Association of Seed Industries to project areas of MV Foundation in Ranga Reddy district on 6-9-2003. The consultative meeting was part of an ongoing process of continuing deliberations and efforts over a period of a year and half between the representatives of some seed companies and organisations like MV Foundation, UNICEF, ILO and SERP to find out ways for collaborative efforts for total elimination of child labour in seed production activities.

Exposure visit to MV Foundation project areas

MV Foundation had organised a field exposure visit to the representatives of Association of Seed Industries on 6-9-2003 to its project areas in Rangareddy district. The representatives of the association have interacted with the children who were withdrawn from work and currently studying in bridge course camps at Aloor and Kulkacharla. They also interacted with the field level functionaries of MVF and representatives of CRPCs (Child Rights Protection Committees) and enquired on how they could address the problem of child labour in their areas. [The representative also made a visit to two cottonseed fields in Ganded mandal.](#) The list of representatives who took part in the exposure visit are : Y.R. Mohanrao, Gulam Rabbani and G. Kumar Swamy Reddy (Emergent Group of companies), Dr. Pimprikar (Syngeta), Akash Kumar (Proagro Seeds), P. Nanda Kumar (Pioneer seeds), Y.Venkatrao (Nuziveedu seeds), Dr. Faujdar Singh (Mahyco), Mukesh Mittal (Monsanto) and G.B. Kulkarni (Ankur seeds). Jagdeeshwar Reddy, Akash Kumar (Proagro).

Consultative meeting on 7-9-2003 at SERP office

The field exposure visit of the representatives of seed companies on 6-9-2003 was followed by a consultative meeting of both the representatives of seed companies and their CEOs and MV Foundation on 7-9-2003 at SERP office, Hyderabad. From MV Foundation, Prof. Shantha Sinha, (secretary), M. Vikram (Treasurer), Mr. R. Venkat Reddy and Rajendra Prasad (coordinators) took part in the meeting. Davuluri Venkateswarlu (researcher) and RVSS Ramakrishna (SCHES) also participated in the meeting (a detailed list of all the participants in consultative meeting is enclosed in appendix). Mr. M. Vikram (treasurer, MV foundation) chaired the meeting and Prof. Shantha Sinha delivered a key note address and initiated the discussion.

The discussion was mainly focussed on various strategies and concrete steps required to address the problem of child labour in seed production activities, methods of collaboration and information sharing between seed industry and, local NGOs, government and other organistaions, involvement of local Child Rights Protection Committees. Following are the minutes of the meeting.

- The representatives of Association of Seed Industry have expressed their deep concern about the practice of employing children in seed production activities, particularly in hybrid cotton and sunflower in some parts of the country by the contract farmers of seed companies. They have also expressed their commitment to work in collaboration with local NGOs and government for total elimination of child labour in seed production activities. The representatives of seed companies stated that they have already initiated some steps internally like including a separate clause in their written agreements with seed farmers against the use child labour, constant monitoring of the situation in the field to deter employing child labour. These measures had some positive impact in reducing the use child labour. However, the representatives of the Association of Seed Industries felt that given the complexity of the problem there is a need for a concerted action by the seed industry in collaboration with local NGOs, Government and other organisations to address the problem of child labour.
- The representatives of the association informed that in the forthcoming Annual General Body Meeting of their association scheduled to be held in the third week of September 2003, the issue of child labour will be discussed and a resolution passed against employment of child labour in seed production activities.
- A separate child labour cell/committee (the exact name of this cell was not finalized. Some of the names suggested are: child labour monitoring cell, child labour abolition cell) was constituted with the representatives of seed companies within the Association of Seed Industries. Mr. Y.R. Mohanrao, Head, HR. Emergent Group of companies will act as a convener of this committee. Syngenta, Advanta, Monsanto, Ankur, Pioneer, Proagro, Mahyco and Nuziveedu companies have agreed to nominate one person each from their companies as members of this committee.
- The proposed child labour cell will function at two levels. At one level it will act as internal monitoring body of the Association of Seed Industries which will constantly review the situation and report to the Association. At another level along with the representatives of external organisations like MV foundation and other concerned organisations it will function as a joint child labour monitoring committee which will design a collaborative action plan and constantly review and report the progress of work to the participant organizations.
- MV Foundation has agreed to extend all necessary technical support to this joint monitoring committee.
- The joint child labour monitoring committee will work out concrete action plans to be implemented for next six months. This committee will also work out proper quantifiable parameters which can be used to judge the progress of work made in the direction towards achieving the total elimination of child labour.
- The proposed joint monitoring committee will act more as an agency for positive outcomes rather than a penalising and policing agency.

- The need for information sharing between participant organisations was felt and modalities and content of information sharing will be decided by the joint monitoring committee.
- The participants of the consultative meeting also felt the need for greater sensitisation of various stakeholders at all levels to address the problem. As a part of this sensitisation process, exposure visits, workshops, public meetings etc are planned. It was also decided to look at a system of reward for seed farmers taking initiatives not to employ child labour in their fields as an encouragement for others towards achieving the larger goal of total elimination of child labour.
- The participant organisations agreed to meet at six month intervals to review the progress of work carried out by joint monitoring committee. The tentative date for next consultative meeting is fixed for 25th March 2004.
- Davuluri Venkateswarlu also informed that due to efforts made by the NGO's like MV Foundation, State government, International agencies like ILO, UNICEF and seed companies, Child labour in cotton fields has come down from 2.5 lacs to 1.5 lacs already in A.P.

List of Participants

S.No	Name	Address
1	V.R Kaundinya	Managing Director, Emergent Genetics, 8-2-120/86/5, Road no 3, Avenue : 7, Banjara hills, Hyderabad vrkaundinya@emergentindia.net
2	Dr. Faujdar Singh	GM R&D, Mahyco House, 3-6-666, Mahyco House, Street No 10, Himayatnagar, Hyderabad-500029 Fsingh@mahyco.com
3	Deepak Mallik	Director International Affairs Association of Seed Industry & Managing Director Advanta India Limited Tel.No: 080 – 5209941
4	Raman Modi	Head Supply Chain Proagro Seed Company Private. Ltd 8-1-39 Tolichowki, Hyderabad
5	Akash Kumar	Production Manager Proagro Seed Company Private Ltd 8-1-39 Tolichowki, Hyderabad
6	A. Jagadeeshwar Reddy	Production Manager Proagro Seed Company Private Ltd 8-1-39 Tolichowki, Hyderabad

7	P. Nanda Kumar	Pioneer Seeds, IIIrd Floor, Babukhan`s Millennium Centre, Rajbhavan Road, Hyderabad-82 Tel.No: (D) 23372900 / 23372891 Extn:201
8	D. Sankar Prasad	HR Manager, Nuziveedu Seeds Limited Surya Towers, SP Road, Hyderabad Tel.No: 27898008 Info@nuziveeduseeds.com
9	Y.Venkat Rao	Nuziveedu Seeds Limited Hyderabad Info@nuziveeduseeds.com Tel.No: 55321500
10	Y.R. Mohan Rao	Head- HR Emergent Genetics, 8-2-120/86/5, Road no 3, Avenue : 7, Banjara hills, Hyderabad yrmrao@emergentindia.com Tel.No: 23555546 / 9849456679
11	B.Ramakrishna Reddy	Dy. General Manager – Prodn. Emergent Genetics, 8-2-120/86/5, Road no 3, Avenue : 7, Banjara hills, Hyderabad Tel.No: 23555 412 – 418 Extn: 314
12	G.Kumar Swamy Reddy IAS (retd.)	Former Principal Secretary, Government. of Andhra Pradesh Advisor Public affairs EG Technologies @ Services Pvt. Ltd. gksregi@yahoo.co.in
13	Gulam Rabbani	Vice President – Prodn & Processing Emergent Genetics, 8-2-120/86/5, Road no 3, Avenue : 7, Banjara hills, Hyderabad
14	Dr. Pimprikar	Syngenta
15	Neeraj jain	Business Head Hindustan Lever Limited Brookefields, Marathahalli Post, P.Box No:3777, Bangalore Tel.No: 080 – 5590321
16	K.S.C Babu	Administarion Monsanto
17	Mukesh Mittal	Regional Business Manager Monsanto India Limited Mukesh.kumar.mittal@monsanto.com

18	G.B Kulkarni	Dy. General Manager Ankur Seeds limited 203, Vipanchi Estate, 2 nd Floor Hyderguda 500029 040-3210392, 3211732 9848304872
19	Ranjana Smateck	Director Public Affiars Monsanto Mumbai 9820190598
20	P.Brahmananda Reddy	Bharati Seeds Nandhyala
21	K.V.S RamaMurthy	Dy. General Manager – Prodn. Emergent Genetics, 8-2-120/86/5, Road no 3, Avenue : 7, Banjara hills, Hyderabad
22	Prof. Shantha Sinha	Secretary MV Foundation
23	R.Venkat Reddy	Coordinator MV Foundation
24	Rajendra Prasad	Coordinator MV Foundation
25	M.Vikram	Treasurer MV Foundation
26	Davuluri Venkateswarlu	Director Glocal Research & Constancy Services 342 Doyens township, Serilingampalli Hyderabad-19 davuluri_v@yahoo.com
27	RVSS Ramakrishna	Coordinator SHECS Sanjamala Kurnool (dist)