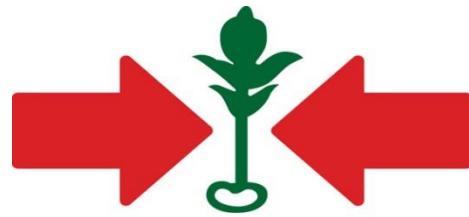


Proceedings and Highlights

REGIONAL CONSULTATION ON CHILD LABOR AND MINIMUM WAGE ISSUES IN HYBRID SEED PRODUCTION

January 30, 2019, Aurangabad, Maharashtra

Hosted by



EAST-WEST SEED



Organised by

ECHO (Enabling Child and Human Rights with Seed Organizations)

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1. Introduction

The name of the existing CCP (Child Care Programme) forum, a multi stakeholder initiative began in 2005 to address child labour and other decent work issues in seed industry has been changed as ECHO (Enabling Child and Human Rights with Seed Organizations) in September 2018 after several consultations with forum members . The first regional consultation meeting of the ECHO on “Child Labour and Minimum Wages issues in Hybrid Seed Production” was held at Hotel Rama International, Aurangabad, Maharashtra on 30 January 2019. This meeting was hosted by East-West Seeds. About 40 representatives from different national and international companies have participated in the meeting. The seed companies that have participated in the meeting included: Syngenta, Nuziveedu, Monsanto, Mahyco, HM Clause, Bayer, Mahyco, Kalash seeds, DuPonto Pioneer (now Corteva Agrisciences), Advanta, Sakata, BASF and East-West Seeds. The non-governmental organisations (NGOs) that participated in the meeting include CARD, CARE and Glocal Research participated in the meeting.

The programme started with the lightening of the lamp by the senior representatives of the seed companies. Following, Mr. Prabhat Patro (HR In charge) from East-West Seeds (EWS) welcomed all the participants and later he made a brief presentation on the EWS Company and its initiatives to produce the quality seeds and quality services in seed industry. Further, he also highlighted the activities initiated by the EWS towards addressing the social compliance issues, especially child labour as well as minimum wages issues in hybrid seed production sector.

Following the welcome address, Mr. PB Kulkarni from Syngenta has set the agenda for the day with a round of introduction by all the participants. He later requested all the representatives of the seed companies to follow the presentation template while making the presentations of the respective companies. The participants were asked to make their presentation focusing on four aspects such as highlights/achievements, challenges and concerns , next action plan and guidance from the forum in their presentations.

2. Objectives

Dr. Davuluri outlined the following main objectives for convening this regional consultation:

1. To share the experiences, learnings and best practices in addressing Child Labour and Minimum wage issues in the Hybrid Cotton and Vegetable seed sectors.

2. To workout the modalities for registration and setting up a secretariat for the ECHO Forum
3. To explore possibilities for joint initiatives and collaboration amongst the different stakeholders.



3. Proceedings and Highlights

3.1 . Presentation by Dr. Davuluri Venkateswarlu

Dr Davuluri thanked all the participants for suggesting different names to existing CCP forum and for finalizing the new name as ECHO (Enabling Child and Human Rights with Seed Organizations) to it. He stated that the forum has broadened the scope from child labour to decent work issue by changing name from CCP to ECHO. In this context, he highlighted the concerted efforts of the companies in reducing the incidence of child labour in the hybrid seed production sector in India. About 14 companies' holds 70 percent of market share in seed industry and most of them are part of ECHO forum now

Later, he made a brief presentation on the present situation of child labour and minimum wages in seed production areas in India covering 2018-19 crop season. Further, he presented a summary of the recent ICN report published in 2018 and entitled “Remedies for India Seed workers in sight”

The report was made by contacting many national and international seed companies and they have also quoted the responses of different company representative in their report. In this regard, Davuluri requested all the participants to read and share the report to top management of their respective companies.

He has explained the recent developments in Europe and Netherlands for bringing the due diligence law in supply chain for European companies working in other parts of the world.

While explaining the all India summary on the situation of child labour presence in seed production for the season 2018-19, he has stated that more than 70 percent of the cotton seed production is located in Gujarat, Telangana and Andhra Pradesh states. He has mentioned that despite of all efforts there was a little improvement with regard to child labour issue in these states since 2015. This situation is posing a challenge to the intervention of the companies present in these states. There was a good results initially in Andhra Pradesh and Telangana states with regard to child labour issue and now it has come to stagnation. On the other hand, 60% cotton seed in Gujarat shifted to remote tribal pockets with majority of them are marginal farmers with average land holding would be 0.25 acres and depends largely on family labour. One of the reasons as to why the companies are shifting their base from other locations to remote areas in Gujarat and Rajasthan is due to availability of cheap labour.

With regard to minimum wages issue, he has stated that the companies are in formative and initial stages and few companies have initiated some work by conducting pilot studies on experimental basis in their processing units/de-tasseling work in corn, where the labour is directly managed by the companies. Other companies should take the cue from the learnings/challenges of these companies and take it forward. In this context, he has stated that the companies should equip themselves with the national and international legislations and follow them accordingly. Here, Davuluri reiterated that a concerted effort from the government, companies, NGOs and other stakeholders is prerequisite for acknowledging and addressing the minimum wages issue in hybrid seed production.

3.2. Company Presentations- Sharing experiences and Learnings

1) East-West Seeds

Mr. Pankaj and Ms.Vaishali from East West Seeds made a presentation on the activities of the company. They informed the group about the happy news that East West Seeds ranked No.1 in access to seeds index 2019 among the Global Seed Companies followed by Syngenta and Bayer. East-West Seeds India conducted joint farm inspections with Glocal Research to monitor the situation of child labour and payment of minimum wages in seed production villages in Karnataka covering tomato, hot pepper, sweet pepper and bitter gourd in 16 different villages with 120 farmers. Two doubtful cases were identified in Sunkalbidari village and later when verified the age proof documents, it was found that both of them are above 14 years age. It was also observed that farmers are not following required safety guidelines while application of pesticides. With regard to minimum wages, the farmers are providing less amount than minimum wages to labour's, the variance in legal minimum wages and actual wages are found 24% in Ranebennur taluk and in other locations it was 39%.

They also shared the details of the minimum wages pilot project implemented by EWS in two states of Maharashtra & Karnataka.

The survey clearly indicates variance in wages payment when compare with the minimum wages fixed by state government in Karnataka state and where as in case of Maharashtra the growers are paying more than the government fixed rates.

Further, they gave an update on the Multi-stakeholder project EWS has initiated to eradicate of child labor in seed production areas with partnership of Centre for Applied Research and Extension (CARE), Glocal Research under funds provided by Dutch government RVO Project. This project is focused on improving the conditions with three key components program include



Children must go to school campaign, setting up a system within company seed supply chain to eradicate child labour and stimulating income development. This is a two year project and activities were began in April 2018. As part of the programme various activities were under and the initial results are very encouraging.

2) Monsanto

Mr. Mahesh Chandak, Mr. Surya Venu and Mr. Girish together made the presentation on the Monsanto's Human Rights Programme. They have explained about the company's initiatives for addressing the decent work issues in their corn and vegetable seeds field areas spanning from a) Safety and health outreach initiatives, b) Ensuring minimum wages initiatives, c) Industry and Human Rights, and Students Safety and Sustainability outreach. Further they have explained about the three core elements of the company for implementation of human rights policy with regard to child labour such as Prevention and Awareness, Monitoring and Governance, and Rehabilitation and Rewards. They have stated that execution and monitoring of the programmes by local teams will ensure value addition and build sustainable CSR Projects in production villages. With regard to minimum wage programme, the company has already required steps to ensure payment of minimum wages in centralized nurseries and research farms. In corn de-tasseling activity company is planning to implement a pilot project in the current season in few villages in Andhra Pradesh.



3) Nuziveedu Seed

Mr. Dinesh Raushan from Nuziveedu seeds made a presentation on the company's Child Labour Policy and process adopted for its implementation at field level. As part of the institutional process NSL's production staff regularly engages in awareness initiatives among the seed growing service providers and their families on the necessity of education for children in the formative years of their life. Vigilance Officers (VOs) have been positioned in the Production/Business operation teams in various regions. The VOs regularly monitor the incidence of child labour in NSL operations and violations of the policy are dealt with as per policy. The VOs are required to periodically report to the Chief Vigilance officer (CVO) at the Headquarters. The GM (production), or an officer of equivalent seniority, is designated as the CVO. Later, he explained about programs conducted By NSL at Cotton Hybrid seed production villages of Gadwal (TS) & Nandyal (AP) and in Gujarat.



The Company has partnered with Mandava Foundation (CSR organisation of NSL group) to carry out CSR activities in its supply chain.

With regard to implementation of minimum wages, he informed that NSL is following minimum wages act at all its facilities directly controlled by company. While mentioning the challenges and concerns, Mr. Raushan stated that the Company has been observing school going children of the farmers in the fields on holidays, resistance from the growers/organisers due to customs and traditions existing in rural areas, very poor economic conditions, and engagement of family members for daily needs, as some of the concerns in the field.

4) Bayer

Mr. Anup from Bayer made a presentation on their activities with regard to child care programme. He has mentioned that the company has developed clear procedures and policies and the implementation process through its 3 pillar



approach, which includes: (i) creating awareness among farmers, (ii) tiered system of incentives and sanctions, and (iii) promoting school attendance. Later, he shared the company's experience on the implementation of minimum wages project. He has highlighted some of the challenges with regard to minimum wages as they are directly related to demand and supply of labour in particular region in particular point of time. These include: documentation of the wages paid and ensuring compliance with the minimum wage standards. Hybrid Seed Production is not a very important part of the overall Indian agriculture. Minimum wages prescribed by the Government are linked to the working hours. Most farmers take up the production of 2-3 crops with various seed companies at a time using the same set of labourers. Hence, it is difficult to capture the actual time worked on the Bayer contracted farms. Further, he explained about activities undertaken by the company with regard to farmer's personal safety, field safety and road safety and how they use lean period for conducting various activities with farmers.

5) BASF (Nunhems)

Mr. BP Ganagadhara and Mr. Sunil Kumar from BASF-Nunhems made a presentation on the highlights of the activities with regard to child labour and minimum wages. They stated that through the Child Care Programme, Nunhems has been systematically campaigned against the engagement of Child Labour in the Seed Supply chain by organizing 53 awareness meetings during summer, rainy and post rainy periods. The activities under this programme include: Awareness programme to growers, Unannounced Field Monitoring, Corrective Actions, Sanctions/ Bonus, Audits, and so on.

They later elaborated on the challenges with regard to minimum wage implementation in case of young workers (18 years) and also the issues like working hours (5 hours), time for refreshment, approval from labour inspector and untimely gazette notifications from government. Later, they presented the action



plan for 2019 and stated that joining the ECHO and working with other seed companies is extremely useful in addressing the child labour and minimum wages issues.

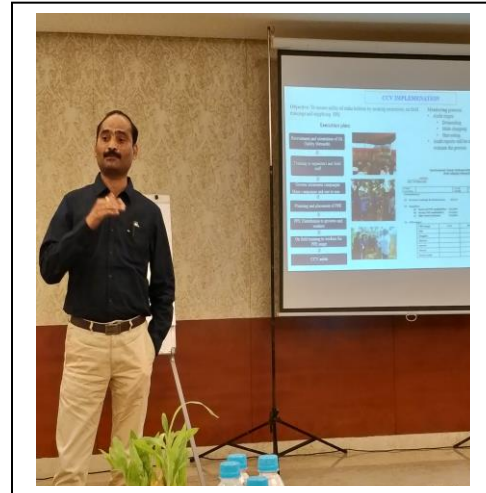
6) Mahyco

Mr. Pramod Patil, Mr. S.D. Gadekar, Mr.G.A Mothe and Mr.Vistar from Mahyco made a presentation on the company activities in addressing the child labour and minimum wages issues in their supply chain. They conduct pre- season meetings with the growers across all field locations at the time of seed distribution. They have put the child labour and minimum wages clauses in the grower agreements forms to make growers as partners in addressing the above issues. They are also educating and guiding the growers through field monitoring visits and by developing field inspection reports on the child labour and minimum wages issues. Further, in order to ensure growers safety, they have implemented the grower protection program and covered 10940 growers under personal accidental insurance policy across the supply chain in Maharashtra. The annual premium amount is being paid by the company.

7) Corteva Agrisciences (formerly DuPont Pioneer)

Mr Manoj Kulkarni from DuPont has explained about their two touch awareness campaign conducting pre-season awareness meetings with growers on contract core values (CCV) with regard to child labour and minimum wages issues.

While explaining about the next action plan, he has stated that the company would focus on three key aspects: a) Inclusivity: working with diverse external stakeholders for addressing decent work issues; b) Focus on local laws to address the child labour and minimum wage issues and, c) Sustainability approach wherein they focus on capacity building of the communities in their supply chain. He proposed to



have a formal collaborative process, involving diverse stakeholders, to address the challenges such as child labour, implementation of minimum wages and other social compliance issues to build the sustainable models. Participants in the meeting have requested him to start 3rd party external audits in their supply chain in order to increase more credibility to their efforts.

8) Advanta

Mr. Abdul Khaleel from Advanta made a brief presentation on the company activities in addressing the child labour and minimum wages issues in their supply chain. Okra is the main crop of the company and it mainly located in Karnataka state. He has explained about highlights of their UACL (United action against child labour) programme in the Karnataka state. Later he elaborated on the process of internal audits in their supply for addressing the child labour issue. Here,



he mentioned about the challenges in with regard to shortage of labour due to out-migration of labour from field locations. Later, while explaining about the next action plan, he said that the company would focus on creating continues awareness on the core issues and also conduct external and internal monitoring in their supply chain. Further, they are also planning to conduct a pilot study on the implementation of minimum wage in one of their field locations.

9) HM Clause

Mrs. Rama from HM Clause made a presentation on the company activities. She informed the participants that HM Clause Company's child care activities in seed production began during 2012. The company has set 16 years as minimum age to work in their supply chain. Further, she stated that during the current season the external auditors found 1 child in their supply chain. Later she explained about the success stories as to how the company has transformed the life of two child labour from their supply chain. While one of them is now doing nursing course and the other one is doing engineering course



with the support of the company. Both minimum wages and the growers' expectations are taken into account, while fixing the procurement price. Since all the company are concerned about paying the minimum wages to the growers, she requested all the companies to come forward to work together in one commonly agreed region on pilot basis for implementation of minimum wages and take it forward.

10) Sakata

Mr.Prashant Garhane from Sakata made a presentation on the company activities. He informed that group that the company has 'no child labour' policy in place and collaborated with SGS Holland for 3 years period up to 2019-20 as an external auditor for child labour audit in Indian seed production. He later informed the group that zero percent child labour incidences reported in the supply chain during the last season.

The company has initiated various activities to address the social compliance issues covering all the operations from sowing to harvesting. This includes pre-season meetings with growers to monitoring field locations by collecting field data through IFM (Internal Field Monitoring) documents. They are also providing trainings on health and field safety and chemical handling to growers and workers.



The major concerns identified by the Company include the difficulty in managing labour wages at the level of the grower and sometimes there is confusion for the auditors in determining the age of the labourers, merely by looking at their physical appearance. He informed the group that going forward more focus would be on the girl child education and payment of minimum wages

With regard to implementation of minimum wages they are successfully implementing minimum wages project in Tamilnadu where the workers are getting wages more than legal

minimum wages. Now they are also conducting pilot project on minimum wages in Karnataka state through two approaches, one with vendors in their home production and the other through group farming approach.

11) Syngenta

Mr. Pushparaj D from Syngenta made a presentation on the highlights of the various activities undertaken by company. Twenty percent of the farms were covered for internal monitoring through a digital tool. The company initiated various activities for field safety, HSE, First Aid training, saved few lives by distributing Anti snake venom kits in the field locations and also given Anti snake repellent ultrasonic sticks to few farmers on pilot basis. The fair compensation project was successfully



completed with the support of FLA. With regard to the next action plan, he stated that the company is planning to extend the implementation of minimum wages project further in problematic areas. The company sought the guidance from the forum with regard to joint efforts to address the issue of child labour and minimum wages and also engagement of all stakeholders for awareness campaigns.

4. NGO Presentations

1) Centre for Agriculture Research Extension (CARE)

Mr. Sai Charan, Mr. Srinivas made a presentation on the highlights of the project being implemented by CARE in collaboration with East –West Seeds, and Glocal Research. They have mentioned that a team of 20 people working different clusters in Karnataka and Gujarat States. He also explained the activities initiated



under the project. These include: Meetings with the community and Stakeholders, Awareness activities, Identification of Children out of School, Child specific action plan, School needs identification and, Support in school admissions.

2) Centre for Agriculture and Rural Development (CARD)

Mr. Pushkaraj from Centre for Agriculture and Rural Development (CARD), a Jalna based NGO, made a presentation on their activities of the CARD organization in the districts of Jalna, Bhuldana, Aurangabad districts in Maharashtra. This FCRA registered NGO is working for the enhancement of livelihoods of youth, farmers, women in the above districts. The NGOs is also working with the Maharashtra government on an integrated watershed development programme in the state.



5. ECHO Registration, Election of executive/governing committee, planning future activities

During post lunch session the members have discussed about organizational matters related to ECHO i.e formal registration of ECHO and election of executive/governing body for the ECHO. Dr Davuluri briefed the members the decisions of the sub-committee formed for finalizing the new name of for the forum and legal registration of the forum. As per the sub-committee recommendations it was decided to change the name of the forum from CCP to ECHO and register the ECHO under Indian Societies Act. For registration of the forum a minimum of seven members are required. It was decided that to start the registration of the forum with the members who have already given their consent to become formal members by agreeing with the ECHO MOU document. The following member have given their consent to join as members of ECHO at the time of registration.

1. Syngenta
2. Bayer
3. Nuziveedu
4. East-West seeds
5. HM Clause

6. BASF
7. Monsanto
8. Advanta
9. Glocal Research

- The other companies such as Sakata, Mahyco, DuPont, Kalash seeds have informed that they will discuss the matter with their management and inform the group about their decision very soon.
- It was decided to state the registration with the members who have already given their consent. The other members can join the forum at a later stage.
- The forum has requested the Glocal Research to take the responsibility of identifying the consulting agency which can help with the registration of the forum.
- The forum also requested the Glocal Research to bear the required expenses for completing the formalities for ECHO registration. This amount can be reimbursed to Glocal after forum gets funds once formal registration is completed.
- It was decided to complete the ECHO registration process in two months time.
- The forum requested the members who have not yet started the pilot projects for minimum wage implementation to do so in the coming season and document the learnings.
- Keeping the challenges the companies are facing in addressing the issue of child labour in Gujarat the forum decided to have the regional consultation meeting in Gujarat in the next season. It was also decided that to organize common awareness programmes by the ECHO members in the areas where higher incidences of child labour was reported.
- The next meeting of ECHO will be held at Hyderabad in the last week of June or July 2019 and exact date will be communicated to members soon.

REGIONAL CONSULTATION ON**CHILD LABOR AND MINIMUM WAGE ISSUES IN HYBRID SEED PRODUCTION**

Date : January 30th, 2019
Time : 10.00 am – 3.30 pm
Venue : Hotel RAMA INTERNATIONAL, Aurangabad, Maharashtra
Organized by: ECHO (Enabling Child and Human Rights with Seed Organizations)
Hosted by : EAST-WEST SEEDS

Time (From - To)		Subject	Responsible
9:45	10:00	Registrations	East-West Seeds
10:00	10:15	Welcome Note	Mr Prabhat Patro- HR- East- West Seeds
10:15	10:20	Agenda for the day	Mr PB Kulkarni
10:20	10:50	Overview of present situation of Child Labour and Minimum wages in seed production areas - Update from 2018-19 crop season Observations from recent ICN report ` Remedies for India seed workers in sight?	Dr. Davuluri Venkateswarlu
10:50	11:00	Update on ECHO Forum Activities in Maharashtra	Maharashtra ECHO committee
		Company Presentations- Sharing experiences and Learnings	Facilitators- Saikat De, Dr. Jacob Kalle and Davuluri
11:00	11:15	RVO multi-stakeholder project for elimination of Child Labour	EWS-CARE
11:15	11:30	Coffee Break	
11:30	12:00	Bayer, Syngenta, Nuziveedu, HM.CLAUSE Monsanto	Company Representatives
12:00	12:30	Nunhems (BASF) Sakata, Advanta, Mahyco and others	Company representatives
12:30	12:40	Sharing field level experiences by CARD	Mr Pushkaraj
12:40	1.00	Discussion and clarifications	
1:00	2:00	LUNCH BREAK	
2:00	3:15	ECHO registration, election of executive/governing committee, planning future activities	ECHO Members (Representatives from all companies , Glocal, CARE etc.)
3.15	3.30	Summing up and way forward	Davuluri Venkateswarlu

ANNEX -2

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

Enabling Child and Human Rights with Seed Organization (ECHO)				
Venue: Rama International, Aurangabad, Maharashtra			Date: 30th January 2019	
Sr. No	Name Of the Participants	Contact Number	Institution/ Organization	Signature
1	B.P. KANAKADHANA NAMPT	9686452744	Nun hens India	Dh
2	Pushparaj .D	9740250858	Syngenta	Pushpa
3	Ramji Kes.	9849419433	HM. CLAUSE.	Ramji
4	Dr. Jacob KALLE	9493393199	GLOBAL	Jacob
5	Daxuluri Venkateswara	9441795557	GLOBAL	Daxuluri
6	Dr. Jaya. J. Tamboli	8149230396	PIH.F.T. Hyderabad	Jaya
7	D.Vijaya lakshmi	8328536794	GLOBAL	D.Vijaya
8	S.D Gaddekar	9423447471	Mahyco	S.D
9	P.M. Patil	7887952493	Mahyco	P.M.
10	G.A. Mothe	9011342858	Mahyco	G.A.
11	Dinesh Roushan	953550385	Muziveedu	Dinesh
12	Subhash prabhale	9158582796	Muziveedu	Subhash
13	Manoj Kulkarni	8008889460	CORTEVA Agra	Manoj
14	Prashant Garkhane	9720804697	Sakata seeds	Prashant
15	Sunilkumar . A	8600995439	Nunhens (NIPR)	Sunilkumar
16	Mahesh Chaudak	9004481336	Monsanto	Mahesh
17	Pranod Kulkarni	9966258783	Syngenta	Pranod
18	S.Sr.ivasubrah	9666008450	CARE	S.Sr.
19	T.S. Sharan	7440717051	CARE	T.S.
20	Saikat K.	9701644457	BASF	Saikat
21	Girish Pagare	7447476215	Monsanto	Girish
22	Anoop Kumar Das	9000010495	Bayer	Anoop
23	Suryakar . P	8460617212	Monsanto	Suryakar
24	Mathew K.S	9900258773	BAYER	Mathew
25	Abdul Khateel	8880702701	Advanta seeds	Abdul
26	Vinod N. Raut	9422940236	Syngenta	Vinod
27	Ramdas T. Malpat	8275064477	Syngenta	Ramdas
28	Ambadas P. Pawar	9511766288	Syngenta	Ambadas
29	Anita D. malari	9834419253	Syngenta	Anita