Children in Maharashtra

AN ATLAS OF SOCIAL INDICATORS

सत्यमेव जयते

Planning Department
Government of Maharashtra

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Note : The boundaries and names shown and designations used on the maps in the inside pages do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations.

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Foreword

It is rightly stated that today's children are the builders of tomorrow and they are leaders of future. It is our duty to improve and enrich their lives and give them a chance to have the joys of childhood. Maharashtra state has more than 40 million children under age of 18 years, which constitutes more than one third of the total population of the state.

The constitution of India presents a vision of a happy, healthy, joyful and literate childhood for all children. Government departments and agencies in cooperation with community, family, village or ward level management committees, local authorities and non-governmental organisations are working for the well-being of children in the state through implementing various programmes. This has been prime priority for the state government and the state has invested a significant part of its budget on programmes for children, so that children's future is bright, happy and secure. State has made significant progress in child related indicators especially in reducing Infant and child mortality, child labour, fertility, child marriages and improving literacy and enrolment rates in recent decades.

There is much more to be done for reducing disparity, between various social groups, geographical areas and wealth quintile groups and the state government is committed toaddress this. The state has prioritized continue addressing these issues in its 12th Plan period. Poverty and ignorance is the basic underlying factor for disparity and inequity and the state Government is taking several initiatives to fight both these issues. The state has constituted regional development boards and Human Development Mission for reducing gaps in development.

It gives me great pleasure to present this publication and would like to thank UNICEF, Field office for Maharashtra for their sincere efforts to put together child related indicators and bringing out this publication. This will be a good reference for all of us who are engaged in development work. I am confident that this publication will give everyone a new impetus to work even more resolutely towards creating all the necessary conditions for the all-round development of the children of Maharashtra.

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Preface

There is no cause nobler than providing maximum priority to children and UNICEF's mandate has always been to promote and safeguard the rights and interests of children across the world. While Governments have the basic duty to protect and fulfil the rights of children, the family and the community also, as duty bearers, have an important role to play. UNICEF is partnering with the Government of Maharashtra, academic institutions, non-government organizations, community members especially youth and adolescents, to forge partnerships in the best interests of children.

This document "Children in Maharashtra - An Atlas of Social Indicators" is an attempt to present a comprehensive picture of the status of children in the state and is being published jointly with the Planning Department of the Government of Maharashtra. This is a compilation of information on child-related indicators collected from published documents as well as information available on the websites of various Government ministries. We are grateful to all of them for maintaining such vital information and making it available in the public domain.

This document has eight sections, namely Population and Demographics, Economic Development, Elementary Education, Maternal and Child health, HIV/AIDS, Nutrition, Water and Sanitation and Child Protection. District wise information is also available on 55 indicators. It is also an attempt to present information in easily readable and understandable ways using maps, graphs and tables with simple descriptions. Disaggregated data by sex, area, social group, wealth quintile and geographical area has been provided in this document; also provided is a trend analysis and comparison with national data wherever possible. This is a situational analysis of the efforts of Government of Maharashtra and all stakeholders working with children.

This document shows that despite numerous problems the situation of children on many indicators has improved but also evident is the fact that significant disparity exists among social groups, wealth quintile groups and districts. The need to fight poverty and empower communities with appropriate knowledge and skills is imperative to remove the dark shadow over the future of our children. Let us continue to think about those children who have no opportunities to access basic facilities due to various reasons. I am confident that this publication will be found useful by all those in the field of development and battling with issues related to the wellbeing children.

Tejinder Singh Sandhu
Chief of UNICEF, Field Office for Maharashtra office

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