



IIMA
Human Rights Office
Istituto Internazionale
Maria Ausiliatrice



FMA NATIONAL
DEVELOPMENT FORUM

52nd Session of the HRC
Item 6 – UPR outcome – India
March 24, 2023
Speaker: Leeshia Teresa Rocha

Oral statement submitted by
**VIDES International – International Volunteerism Organization for Women, Education
and Development**

And co-signed by
IIMA – Istituto Internazionale Maria Ausiliatrice delle Salesiane di Don Bosco

With the support of
FMA Provincials Conference of India (PCI)
and
National Development Forum (NDF) - India

VIDES on behalf of this NGO coalition commends the constructive participation of India in its 4th UPR.

Concerning **children at risk of separation and in need of alternative care**, we welcome the acceptance of recommendation 151.305¹ and *highlight the importance of reintegrating the children in families whenever possible, and if not, involving relevant stakeholders to build a circle of protection around them and promote personalized and high-quality alternative care solutions.*

With regard to **violence against children**, including **child marriage and child labor**, we welcome the acceptance of recommendations 151.256, 279 and 285². However, we are concerned

¹ Recommendation 151.305 Ensure the establishment of the necessary infrastructure for the wellbeing and development of orphans (Gabon); See Report of the Working Group of the UPR of India, UN Document A/HRC/52/11, 14 December 2022; and its Addendum A/HRC/52/11/Add.1, 27 February 2023.

² Recommendation 151.256 Take concrete measures to promote and protect the human rights of women and girls, including by combating all forms of discrimination and violence against them, and addressing their root causes; 151.279 Strengthen enforcement mechanisms for the prevention of gender-based violence, by allocating additional budget for its elimination in the long term through early childhood education and awareness-raising, and by establishing and resourcing institutions to support victims; 151.285 Increase the financial and human resources allocated for the implementation of protection mechanisms for girls, boys and adolescents, with a view to eradicating child labour and child marriage as well as sexual exploitation. Other relevant recommendations on the topic: 151.201, 151.288, 151.266, 151.281, 151.282, 151.136, 151.298, 151.273, 151.299, 151.289, 151.269, 151.287, 151.300, 151.283, 151.304 and 151.301. *Ibidem.*

about the increase of child marriages and teen pregnancy during the pandemic.³ *We recommend to reconstitute community-based mechanisms like the Village Level Child Protection Committee (VLCPC), and the Neighbourhood Child Protection Committee Level (NCPC), to monitor and address child rights violations, especially child labour, child marriage, child trafficking and sexual abuse.*

Concerning the **right to education**, the pandemic has only exacerbated the difficulties experienced in already precarious contexts, such as rural areas where critical educational issues persist, as shown by the low enrolment and high dropout rates as well as by the shortage of qualified teachers and inadequate curricula. While regretting that recommendations 151.203 and 204 were only noted by India,⁴ *we reiterate the importance to effectively implement the 2009 Right to Free and Compulsory Education Act, ensuring consistency of States' legal frameworks.*

Thank You

³ In the survey conducted by this NGO coalition in nine states of India among children, adolescents and youth (10-20 years), the 67.4 per cent of the respondents agreed that marriages have increased as a result of the pandemic, girls being mainly affected. 61.9 per cent of the respondents have also indicated an increase in teen girls' pregnancy.

⁴ Recommendation 151.203 Expand the application of the Children's Right to Free and Compulsory Education Act 2009 to ensure universal access to primary and secondary education for period of 12 years (Egypt); Recommendation 151.204 Continue its efforts for the implementation of its global policies aimed at providing all children with free and compulsory quality education (Gabon); See Report of the Working Group of the UPR of India, UN Document A/HRC/52/11, 14 December 2022; and its Addendum A/HRC/52/11/Add.1, 27 February 2023.