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What do Children Need to Flourish? Considerations for India

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Approaches to Nurturing Children and Youth
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Content of this presentation has been
taken directly from the India Child Well-
Being Report, 2019 and the Good
Childhood Report, 2019

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Outline

- **India's Child Well-Being Report 2019**
- **Why the Child Well-Being Index?**
- **India child well-being**
- **Measuring child well-being**
- **Composite Index Findings**
- **Key lessons**
- **Expectations**
- **Good Childhood Report 2019**



India Child Well-Being Report

➤ Poverty rate has halved in the decade since 2005-2006

➔ 55% to 28%

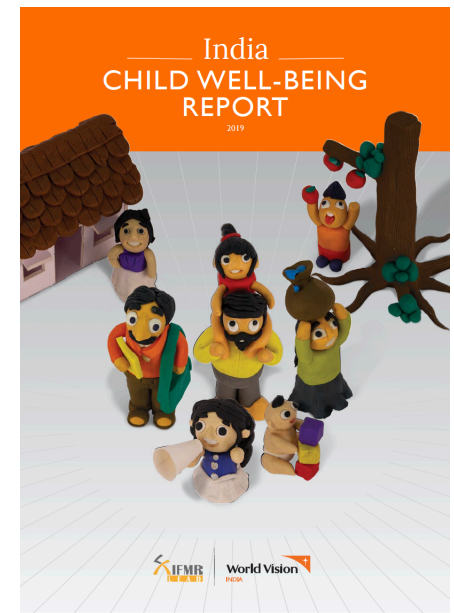
➤ Poverty

➔ 370 million people living below the poverty line

➤ Inequality

➔ Richest 1% of population holds more than 50% of national wealth

➔ Bottom 60% owns only 4.8% of national wealth *(Oxfam Wealth Report, 2019)*



Children are the Foundation

- Children (0-18) make up 40% of India's demographic
 - ➔ 472 million children (29% 0-6 years of age)
 - ➔ Making them crucial to the future growth and development of the nation
- *India Child Well-Being Report (2019)*
 - ➔ Ecological view of child well-being
 - ⇒ In keeping with the United Nations
 - ➔ Measures child well-being as a state that facilitates:
 1. Healthy individual development
 2. Positive relationships
 3. Protective contexts



Why the Child Well-Being Index?



- Snapshot of child well-being in each state and union territories
- Current well-being data
- Multi-dimensional approach to measuring well-being
- Urgent and immediate calls to action by government
- Apt for ICCY
 - ➔ *‘As an organization that believes in “life in all its fullness” for every child. World Vision India hopes that this report would set off conversations among India’s elected representatives, bureaucrats, media, private entities, academia and the civil society, ultimately helping it invest more in the lives of its 472 million children’ (p. 2)*



India and Child Well-Being

➤ Indian Constitution

➔ 'Ensure that children are given opportunities and facilities to develop in a healthy manner and conditions of freedom and dignity and that childhood and youth are protected against exploitation and against moral and material abandonment.' (p. 5)

➤ 0.9 million children under the age of five died in India in 2016 – the highest globally

➤ Social inequalities exacerbate the ill-effects on communities

➔ And the children of these communities

➤ Social class impacts significantly on death and success rates

➤ 2.4% over 15 have technical degrees, diplomas, or certificates

➤ 4.35 million children (5-14) are working

➔ Increased to 35.38 million if 5-19 included



Reducing Poverty?

- Poverty reduction alone has created a lopsided discourse
- Child well-being in India needs to be assessed through a multidimensional, integrated, multidisciplinary approach
 - ➔ The minutiae of complexities and traits impacting on India's children need fleshing out
 - ➔ Holistic approach is vital



Measuring Child Well-Being

- **Health is not merely the absence of disease**
 - ➔ It includes physical, mental, social, and personal well-being
- **General well-being of children shapes the future health of societies**
- **Well-being is a measure of quality of life that enables children to thrive**
 - ➔ No standard frameworks to measurement exists
- **Current shifts in child well-being indicators:**
 - From focusing on child survival to child well-being
 - From negative outcomes to positive outcomes
 - From well-becoming to well-being
 - From traditional to new domains
 - From an adult perspective to a child perspective
 - Towards a composite index of child well-being
 - Towards a more policy-oriented effort (Arieh, 2010)



India Child Well-Being Report

- **Composite child well-being index**
- **Ecological view of child well-being**
 - ➔ Children in society interacting with others as members

- **Three key dimensions:**

- 1. Healthy Individual Development**

- ➔ Stunting
- ➔ Underweight
- ➔ Institutional births
- ➔ Budget
- ➔ Mortality rate
- ➔ Immunisation
- ➔ Mental health
- ➔ Passed class X
- ➔ Pupil teacher ratio
- ➔ Basic reading and math
- ➔ Drop out rate
- ➔ Drinking water
- ➔ Sanitation

- 2. Positive Relationships:**

- ➔ Sex ratio
- ➔ Birth registration
- ➔ Juvenile crimes
- ➔ Suicide rates

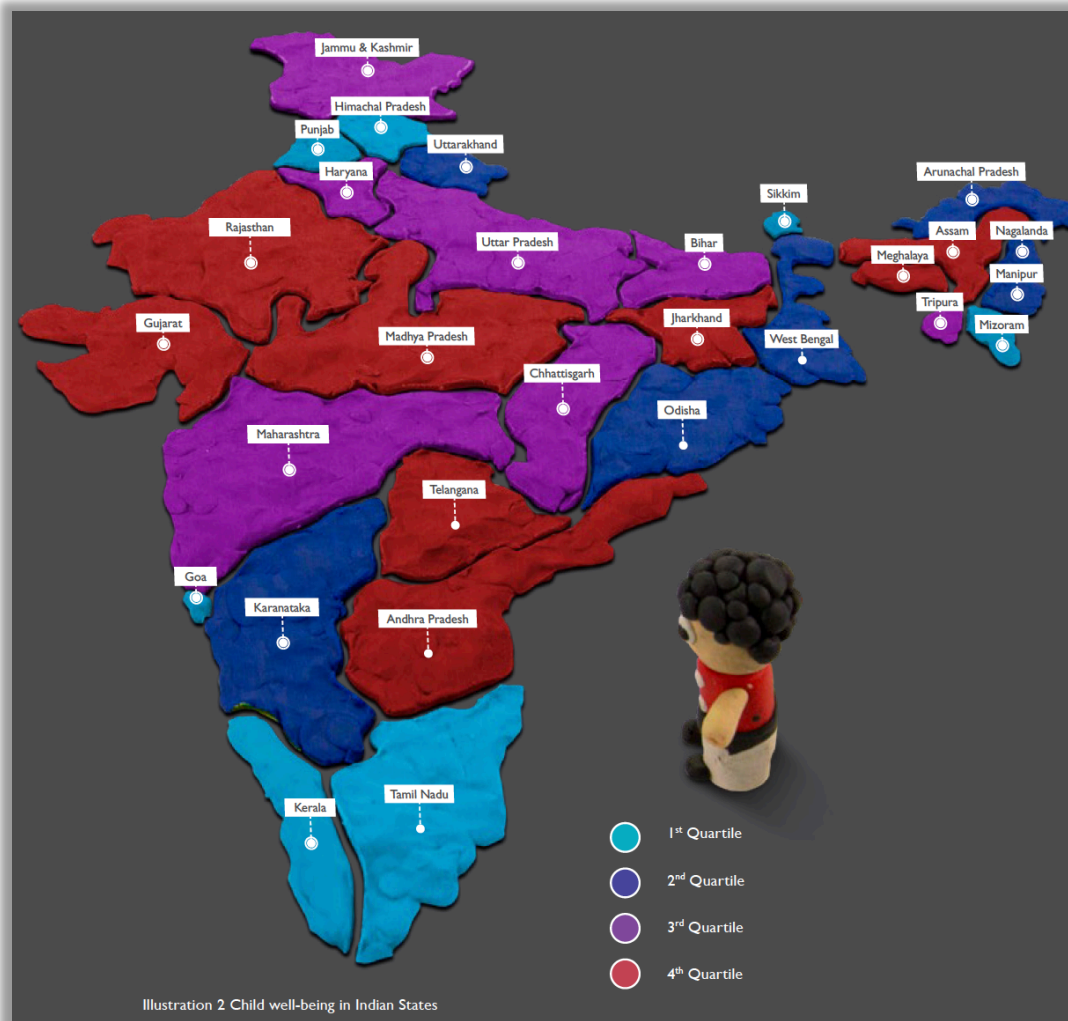
- 3. Protective Contexts**

- ➔ Child labour
- ➔ Houseless
- ➔ Crimes against children
- ➔ Poverty
- ➔ Early marriage
- ➔ Primitive groups
 - ➔ Labourers
 - ➔ Scavengers
- ➔ Length of roads

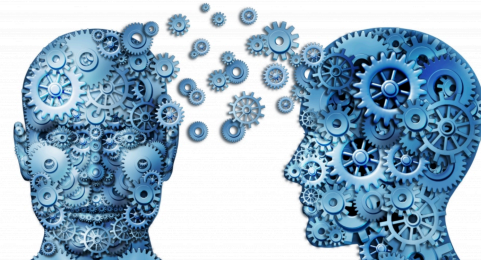


Composite Index Findings

Status of
child well-
being in
India – at a
glance



Key Lessons



- **Attempt to measure child well-being from multidimensional aspects**
 - ➔ Adequate nutrition, health care, education, housing, care from parents and community, and protection from exploitation
 - ➔ State-wise index can improve knowledge and performance of the country as a whole
 - ➔ Index can be updated as new government data is available
- **More robust data along the dimensions required**
 - ➔ Are children loved and cared for?
 - What is the quality of the relationships between parents and children?
 - ➔ Do children get enough support from the community?
 - ➔ What about impact of technology?
 - Mobile usage, digital access, financial literacy etc.
- **Expansion of the scope of current understandings required**



Expectations

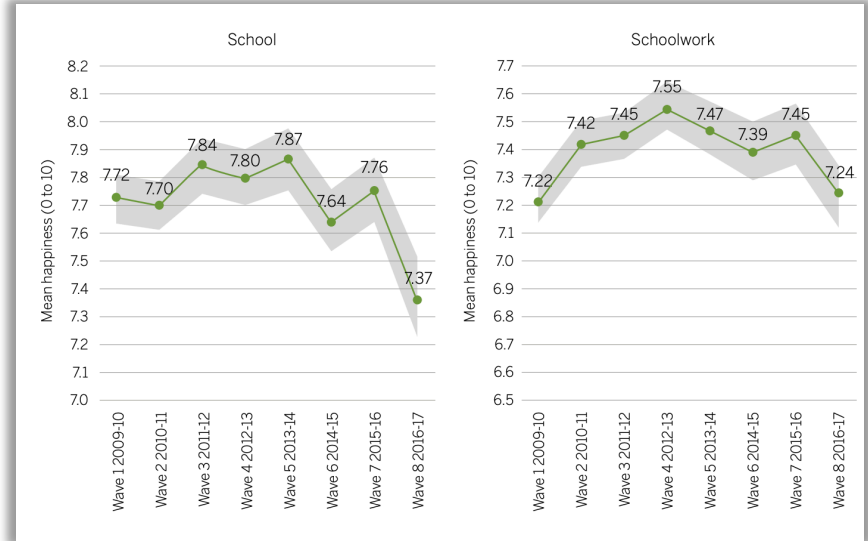
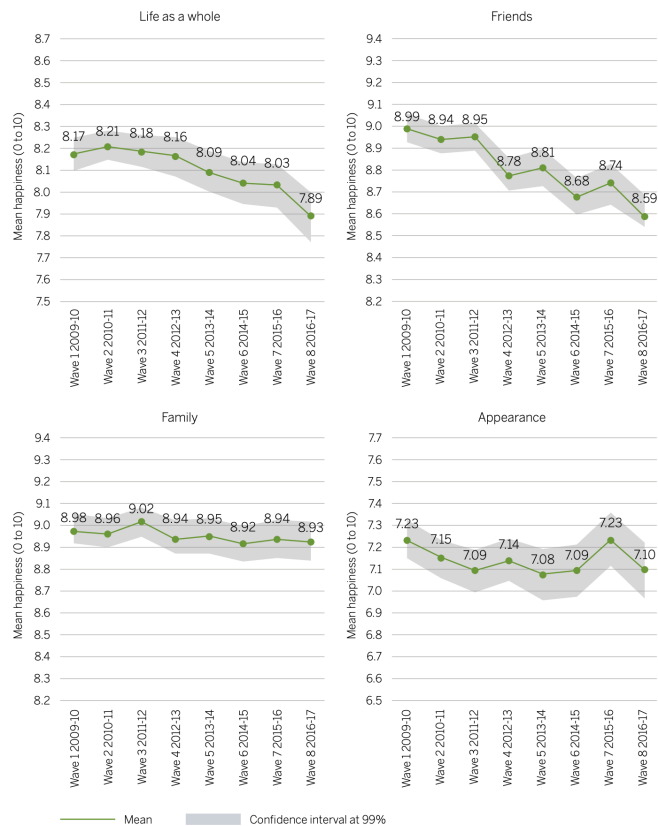
- Trigger policy-level changes
- Guide policy decisions
 - ➔ New bills, amendments and rules, budgetary allocations and implementation strategies
- Prioritise child well-being
- Trigger further analysis and discussions
- Provoke evidence-based conversations
 - ➔ Academic, political, bureaucratic, private entities, civil society
- Recognition that child well-being is a cornerstone to nation-building
 - ➔ 'leaving no one behind'



Good Childhood Report

The Children's Society The Good Childhood Report 2019

Figure 7: Trends in children's happiness with different aspects of life, UK, 2009–10 to 2016–17



‘Health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity.’ (Constitution of World Health)



Good Childhood Report

- ¼ million children 'unhappy'
- 180,000 (7.7%) boys 10-15 unhappy with appearance
 - ➔ +13 significantly more
- 11.8% unhappy with school
- 2.8% unhappy with friends
- Highlighted issues:
 - ➔ Poverty
 - ➔ Enough to eat
 - ➔ Homelessness
- 33% worried about having enough money in the future
- 29% worried about getting a job



Thank You!

