

OECD Policy Evaluation of Child Protection Schemes: Evidence from Odisha, India

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Abstract

Using OECD evaluation criteria, we analysed the child protection schemes of Odisha to understand whether legal commitments on child protection are translated into fiscal commitments. The intergovernmental fiscal transfers and State specific specifically targeted programmes for the children in need of care and protection (CNCP) and children in conflict of law (CCL) are evaluated using the OECD criteria of relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability. Using the theory of change, various fiscal interventions for child protection are analysed with activities, outputs, intended outcomes and impacts. The analysis revealed that in the post pandemic fiscal strategy of Odisha, various programmes have been designed by the government to tackle the capability deprivation, hardships and vulnerabilities faced by the children within the budgetary frameworks and these programmes are made fiscally sustainable through public expenditure convergence within the classification of budgetary transactions. However, the low utilisation ratios of the funds and the institutional constraints are identified as the challenges in the effective implementation of child protection programmes in Odisha.

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Introduction

Within a comprehensive legal framework, India delineates the rights and protection for children, ensuring that all children have equal access to public provisioning of quality child protection services. The government schemes for child protection services are designed and implemented under four main child protection legislations: The Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection) Act (2000, amended in 2015); The Prohibition of Child Marriage Act (2006); The Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act (2012), and The Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act (1986, amended in 2016). Against the backdrop of "Prarambha: The Odisha State Policy for Children 2022" the Government of Odisha has strengthened the policies upholding 'Rights of Children in Odisha, with special emphasis on four thematic areas: migration, natural disasters, conflict, and mining². Recognizing the need of retooling fiscal strategies in the post- pandemic times, the policies were further strengthened in the context of children's increased vulnerability during the COVID-19 pandemic.

UNICEF's Child Protection Strategy, 2021-2030, defines child protection as the prevention of and response to exploitation, abuse, neglect, harmful practices, and violence against children³, which is embedded in the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Sustainable Development Goals. Against the backdrop of these legislations, the focus of the paper is to conduct evaluation of the child protection schemes and programs, by applying the OECD DAC criteria of relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, coherence, and sustainability to selected child protection schemes.

Using identified NIPFP-UNICEF matrices-M1 (desk review of administrative documents), M2 (review of literature), and M3 (stakeholder consultations in the field)-we analyse the planning, budgeting, and implementation processes of child protection schemes at the state, district, and local levels. This analysis is to identify the gaps in the flow of funds, implementation structure, inter-departmental convergence, and accountability mechanisms. The analysis is undertaken within a considered and adaptable framework for child protection PER, with specific focus on COVID-19 impacts. The performance of the child-protection schemes and programmes is further evaluated to understand the equity

² Odisha State Policy for Children, 2022 page 10

³ UNICEF Child Protection Strategy <https://www.unicef.org/documents/child-protection-strategy>

aspects of fiscal interventions in meeting the needs of children from the most vulnerable and marginalised groups based on gender, caste, and disability.

Odisha is a fiscally prudent state. The fiscal deficit for 2023–24 is pegged at 3% of GSDP, at Rs 25,844 crore. The state has also specified a fiscal strategy delineating its intention to remain on the path of fiscal consolidation through revenue buoyancy. In the post-pandemic fiscal strategy of Odisha, there is an increasing recognition of the need to integrate measures to support children and families to tackle the increased risk of hardship caused by the pandemic. The fiscal policy interventions are strengthened to provide children with adequate social protection against vulnerability caused by increased risk of forced marriage, abuse, violence, poverty, the pandemic, and malnutrition. Child budgeting—an increasingly recognised long-term Public Financial Management (PFM) tool—aims to tackle the capability deprivation, hardships, and vulnerabilities faced by children. These fiscal policy interventions are crucial as children are twice as likely as adults to live in abject poverty and are vulnerable to abuse and impoverishment⁴.

In Odisha, children constitute one-third of the State's population of 4.2 crores (Census 2011). The Government of Odisha has either expanded the scope of existing programmes or introduced measures to support children affected by the COVID-19 pandemic (including the children who lost both parents) and focused on food security, lifeline social infrastructure support for redressing economic hardships, and labour market struggles. Identifying sustainable financing for child budgeting by mobilising domestic resources and strengthening social infrastructure and social protection for children by guaranteeing access to education, health, protection, and development is crucial for the future human capital formation of the state. Against this backdrop, we unpack the "protection" component of child budgeting in Odisha, focusing on five government schemes using the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) evaluation framework.

We analysed five child protection schemes of Odisha designed for "children in need of care and protection" and "children in conflict of law". These child protection schemes in Odisha are (i) the Integrated Child Protection Scheme (Mission Valsalya); (ii) the clubbed

⁴ <https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/press-release/2016/10/03/nearly-385-million-children-living-extreme-poverty-joint-world-bank-group-unicef-study>

programme of Odisha Ashirwad Yojana and Biju Shishu Surakshya Yojana; (iii) Juvenile Justice Funds; (v) the Special Court under the POCSO Act (Fast Track Special Courts (FTSCs)); and (v) the Implementation of Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act, 1986.

The Child Budgeting analysis – an increasingly recognised long term PFM tool primarily to tackle the capability deprivation, hardships and vulnerabilities faced by children - revealed that fiscal policy incorporates the concerns relate to education, health, nutrition, water and sanitation, protection from abuse and violence and the COVID-19 pandemic. The Child Budgeting in Odisha for Budget 2023–24 revealed that the state spends on education (68.27%), health (13.25%), development (9.13%), and child protection (10.04%) in 2023–24. There are 23 child protection schemes – both centrally sponsored and State sponsored schemes in Odisha. Strengthening the public social infrastructure investment in child-friendly and shock-responsive social protection mechanisms is a significant fiscal policy intervention to protect children from living in abject poverty and increase coping mechanisms and resistance from experiencing prolonged vulnerabilities. These fiscal policy interventions are crucial as children are twice as likely as adults to live in abject poverty and vulnerable to abuse and impoverishment. In Odisha, children constitute one-third of the State’s population of 4.2 crores (Census 2011). The Government of Odisha has either expanded the scope of existing programmes or introduced measures to support children affected by COVID-19 pandemic losing both parents and focused on lifeline social infrastructure support, economic hardships, labour market struggles, conflict, natural disasters and food security.

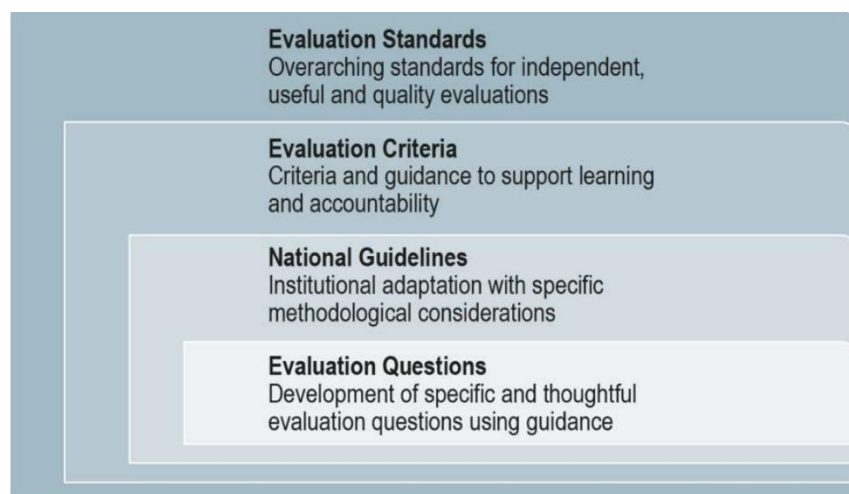
In the post-pandemic fiscal strategy, it is laudable that the government of Odisha has introduced a programme to support children who have been “scarred” by the pandemic by loss of their parents and confronting a devastating new normal through Odisha Ashirwad Yojana. The pandemic years have seen an increase in the children who have been left orphaned. Children and adolescents, though generally at low risk of infection, have experienced the pandemic and related restrictions and lockdown periods differently. It had profound impact on their well-being, with largest disruption of education in history and “learning loss”. The government of Odisha has invested in social infrastructure in education and health, which also shows its commitment to children and young people in ensuring safe schooling and also to minimize the disruptions of essential health systems for children.

Using OECD evaluation methodology, in this paper, we analysed six criteria - relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability – of child protection schemes in a subnational government in India. The paper is organised as follows. Section 1 deals with OECD analytical framework, while section 2 explains the approach and methodology of evaluation of child protection schemes. Section 3 adapts the OECD DAV criteria through child protection specific matrices. Section 4 analyses the child protection schemes through OECD evaluation matrices in terms of relevance and coherence, while section 5 analyses the efficiency and effectiveness of spending. Section 6 analyses the impact and sustainability using Theory of Change framework. Section 7 concludes.

1. OECD Evaluation: The Analytical Framework

Back in 1991, OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC) developed five principles for evaluation of development assistance that came to be known as Evaluation Criteria (OECD, 2010). Applying the criteria for almost 25 years and enormous global consultations, a new criterion ‘Coherence’ was added to the existing 5 criteria to make the definitions more nuanced and clearer. (OECD, 2019). OECD DAC Criteria has become the common-reference point for the evaluators over the years. Further, with the adoption of the SDG Agenda for Sustainable Development by 2030 and Paris Agreement within the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) has made this criterion more imperative in determining the effectiveness of the programs (OECD, 2021).

Figure 1: How the criteria fit in with other norms and standards



Source: OECD (2021)

Figure 1 explains how the OECD criteria fits in with a set of evaluation standards. We may use the OECD evaluation criteria keeping in perspective the national policy and objectives of the country and then suitably design the evaluation questions under the chosen evaluation criteria. With such a process, one can vividly examine the positive and negative aspects of the interventions and inform the policymakers for better policy design and implementation frameworks.

Along with the OECD DAC Evaluation Criteria (OECD, 2021), there are two guiding principles set out by OECD Network on Development Evaluation. One, the criteria should be applied thoughtfully and adapted as per the context of the intervention to support high quality evaluation. The evaluation must ask for the context, type of evaluations and the timing of the evaluation to be conducted. The criteria should be applied considering the gender aspects and other differences. Two, use of the criteria depends on the objectives of evaluation. The context and the characteristics should be clearly defined before the evaluation is conducted.

Figure 2: OECD Evaluation Criteria



Source: OECD (2021)

Following the OECD publication, *'Applying Evaluation Criteria Thoughtfully'*, the six criterion for evaluation are explained as follows (figure 2).

2. The Approach and Methodology

The data is derived from Government of Odisha through published sources and structured questionnaire and matrices provided by NIPFP and UNICEF. The methodology is both quantitative and qualitative (Q-squared approach) through desk-based research of relevant documents, guidelines, and data (M1), literature review to understand institutional structure, existing capacities, funds allocation and expenditure, bottlenecks in the identification and reaching vulnerable children, key departments responsible, interdepartmental coordination around child welfare programs in Odisha (M2) and key informant discussions (M3) of stakeholders including senior officials of departments of Finance, Child Development and Accountant General's Office. The criteria for selecting the districts can be based on National Crime Record Bureau (NCRB) data, multidimensional poverty indices and spatial convergence.

3. OECD DAC Evaluation: Adapting the criteria through matrices

Using the five evaluation criteria (figure 2), we examine the six child protection fiscal policy interventions. Key evaluation questions (KEQs) are clustered according to the evaluation criteria provided. The assessment focussed essentially on the effectiveness of child welfare programs and the efficiency with which the allocated budget is spent. Evaluating relevance implies how well the objectives of a policy intervention are defined and aligned with the current international standards for development interventions. Some relevance-related evaluation questions can be as follows. Is the intervention doing the right thing? How well the intervention will respond to country/institutions needs and priorities?

This criterion works on an integrated approach to assess synergies across departments as well as cross-country. Alternatively, this includes the internal and external coherence. Internal coherence means how well a particular policy intervention is aligned with other policy interventions in the department as well as the coordination among the other departments responsible for implementation of the intervention as well. Such an assessment helps to figure out the duplications in efforts or if the intervention complements each other. External coherence is another important consideration as it considers the intervention alignment with the international policy commitments such as SDGs as one important goal under SDG is SDG 17 that is 'increasing policy coherence for

sustainable development’. Some coherence questions are as follows: Are there any synergies across department for a policy intervention? How well the intervention fit?

Table 1: Child Protection: OECD Relevance Evaluation Matrix

OECD DAC	KEQ	Juvenile Justice	Integrated Child Protection	POCSO	BSSY	Child Labour
Relevance	How aligned are the child protection programmes/schemes with global/SDG priorities and strategies?					
	How aligned are the child protection programmes/schemes with the Odisha government priorities at state, district and local levels?					
	To what extent and in what ways does the child protection programmes/schemes address gender inequalities and equity gaps taking into consideration the disparities regarding caste, residence, religion, disability, and wealth? How adequate is this approach?					
	To what extent has the state government been able to adapt its child protection programmes/schemes to changing needs and priorities, specifically following COVID-19? Are there any ongoing COVID-specific programs and interventions?					

Table 2: Child Protection: OECD Coherence Evaluation Matrix

OECD DAC	KEQ	JJA	ICPS	POCSO	BSSY	Child Labour
Coherence	How does the child-protection programmes align with the other ongoing child related programmes in Odisha?					
	How does the child-welfare programmes align with the work of partner organisations in Odisha (partner programmes/interventions)?					

This criterion helps in assessing the extent to which the policy intervention has achieved its objectives and has attained the planned results. This is helpful in understanding the root cause of a policy intervention and its timelines (delay etc.). Also, it is useful in knowing the intended and un-intended effects that implementation of a policy interventions has raised. These effects can be both positive and negative and can cut across environmental, social and other economic effects at the output or outcome level. This is in alignment with SDG universal value of *'leaving no one behind'*. The criterion encourages to look over the equity aspects of the interventions whereby how inclusive has been the policy intervention for different targeted groups and have the intervention reached the most marginalised. Some effectiveness questions are as follows: Is the policy intervention achieving its objectives? Whether the policy intervention has attained its planned results?

Table 3: Child Protection: Effectiveness Evaluation Matrix

OECD DAC	KEQ	Juvenile Justice	ICPS	POCSO	BSS Y	Child Labour
Effectiveness	To what extent the CP schemes in Odisha have been effective in achieving the intended outcomes?					
	How effective has the budget allocation and expenditure on child protection programmes/schemes been in addressing gender inequalities and inherent equity gaps or taking into consideration the disparities with regard to caste, residence, gender, religion, wealth?					
	What are the some of the bottlenecks/challenges in the implementation/roll-out of child protection programmes/schemes? What are the institutional and structural hurdles to ensure sustainable delivery of services to vulnerable children under various ongoing programs in the state?					
	What have been some of the unintended outcomes of these child protection programmes/schemes in Odisha?					

Better use of limited resources make room for additional policy goals that can be met through cooperation. Efficiency criterion in this sense becomes an important criterion to improve the functioning of the policy interventions and its implementation. The criterion checks for the feasibility of the intervention in regard to resources being utilised. The criteria look over the economic as well as the operational efficiency and timeliness. Economic efficiency implies achieving the outcomes in the most cost-efficient manner while operational efficiency implies how well the resources are utilised for the intervention during implementation. The criterion examines if the budget has been spent fully as planned, or over or underspent. This also means to assess the extent that the human resources were adequately realised for an intervention. Some efficiency questions can be as follows. How well are the resources being used? Examine the value of money spent on different policies and programmes. Were the resources designated to the intervention appropriately utilised?

Table 4: Child Protection: Efficiency Evaluation Matrix

OECD DAC	KEQ	Juvenile Justice	Integrated Child Protection	POCSO	BSSY	Child Labour
Efficiency	To what extent the child protection programmes/schemes in the state are adequately resourced to achieve their outcomes?					
	In comparison to the funds released by centre v/s funds released by the state for the CP schemes, an analysis of the processes, time taken, etc.					
	To what extent the child protection programmes/schemes in the state achieved outcomes within the planned monetary resources allocated?					
	To what extent child protection programmes/schemes in Odisha delivered services within the stipulated timeframe?					
	What are the child governance and monitoring mechanisms in place to track the progress and achievement of child protection linked outcomes?					

Sustainability criterion means understanding the impact of an intervention in a broader context. It largely assesses the likely continuation of an intervention benefit in medium and long term. It also means to check upon the exit plan of a policy intervention in order to know the extent to which the exit plan was successful in continuation of benefits. Sustainability of a policy intervention also means to understand the resilience that has been established to take external shocks and changes. Some sustainability questions are as follows. What is the extent to which the benefits extended to the stakeholders and the beneficiaries if the intervention ended? Has the intervention enabled capacity strengthening, increased national level budget commitments or increase accountability for public expenditures? What is the likelihood of continuation of benefits?

Table 5: Child Protection: Sustainability Evaluation Matrix

OECD DAC	KEQ	Juvenile Justice	Integrated Child Protection	POCSO	BSSY	Child Labour
Sustainability	Is there any modification required at the local levels for better implementation of programs?					
	What are the critical lessons that can be learned from other states/districts and incorporated for better implementation (budgetary allocation, distribution) of child protection programmes/schemes in Odisha?					
	How well equipped and self-sufficient are the departments working on child protection in terms of monetary resources, manpower and technical skills?					

Since this evaluation will examine the child-centric programs over the past 5 years, covering pre-COVID and COVID-19 contexts, all relevant evaluation questions will cover both the pre-COVID and COVID information. The assessment is both summative and formative in nature i.e., we analyse and articulate information from ongoing programs,

budget allocation and expenditure for the current year as well as last few years using M1 and M2 methodologies and identify the gaps.

Table 6: Child Protection Evaluation Matrix: Cross-Cutting Criteria

OECD DAC	KEQ	Juvenile Justice	Integrated Child Protection	POCSO	BSSY	Child Labour
Cross-Cutting	To what extent are social and gender disaggregated data collected and monitored during the child-protection programming?					
	In what ways and to what extent has the child protection programmes/schemes integrated an equity-based approach into the design and implementation of the programmes? How adequate is this approach?					
	Does the child protection programmes/schemes contribute to the promotion of the right to protection, especially for the most vulnerable?					
	In what ways and to what extent has the child protection programmes/schemes been gender responsive or transformative?					

The assessment will help to articulate recommendations to guide while designing and implementing child welfare programs in the future. A mixed method approach for data collection is followed, in the form of desk-based research, literature reviews and KIIs with multiple stakeholders at State level including Finance Department, Department of Child Development and CAG. The comprehensive matrix stating the KEQs as well as SEQs for all CP schemes is given in Annexure 1.

4. Child Protection Schemes: Applying OECD DAC Criteria of Relevance and Coherence

The Department of Finance, Government of Odisha has provided 22 schemes (Table 7). We examined the six child protection schemes in the context of Odisha, namely (i) Integrated Child Protection Scheme (Mission Valsalya) (ii) Biju Shishu Surakshya Yojana, (iii) Juvenile Justice Funds, (v) Special Court under POCSO Act (Fast Track Special Courts (FTSCs)), and (v) Implementation of Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act,1986. Using OECD evaluation methodology, in this paper, we analysed six criteria - relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability – of child protection schemes in Odisha. This section analyses the scheme as per the OECD DAC Criteria in order to examine the gaps, limitations and intended or unintended effects of the policy interventions using the desk-based review of the policy documents and literature available.

Table 7 : Child Protection Schemes in Odisha, 2021-22 to 2023-24

Sl. No.	Departments	Name of the Scheme/Programme	Exp. type	2021-22 (RE)	2022-23 (BE)	2023-24 (BE)
1	Home	3296 - Cyber Crime Prevention against Women and Children	PE - CS	120.61	41.81	10.04
2	Home	3406 - Special Court under POCSO Act (Fast Track Special Courts (FTSCs))	PE - CSS	2364.10	6524.17	3975.44
3	L&ESI	1975 - Implementation of Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act,1986	PE - SSS	141.30	273.30	466.00
4	WCD	0018 - Adoption of Orphan and destitute children	PE - SSS	0.00	0.01	100.00
5	WCD	0107 - Care and protection of Street children	PE - SSS	0.00	0.01	300.00
6	WCD	0859 - Maintenance of Orphan and Destitute Children	PE - SSS	0.00	0.01	500.00
7	WCD	1639 - Rehabilitation of Child in need of care and protection of Juveniles in conflict with Law.	AE - EOM	134.06	225.77	160.63
8	WCD	2355 - State Council for Child Welfare	PE - SSS	35.00	35.00	35.00

Sl. No.	Departments	Name of the Scheme/Programme	Exp. type	2021-22 (RE)	2022-23 (BE)	2023-24 (BE)
9	WCD	2479 - State Commission for Protection of Child Rights	PE - SSS	89.43	91.23	50.00
10	WCD	3192 - Biju Sishu Surakshya Yojana	PE - SSS	300.00	300.00	300.00
11	WCD	3192 - Biju Sishu Surakshya Yojana - 78774 - ASHIRBAD	PE - SSS	3500.00	5000.00	5200.00
12	WCD	3244 - Juvenile Justice Funds	PE - SSS	300.00	500.00	500.00
13	WCD	3519 - Mission VATSALYA	PE - CSS	6736.43	6900.00	8500.00
14	HE	2889 - Youth Welfare Policy, 2013 - 78488 - Self-defence Training to girl students	PE - SSS	24.19	100.00	100.00
15	SS&EPD	1548 - Voluntary Organisation for maintenance of physically handicapped and mentally retarded children - 41078 - Grants-in-aid	AE - EOM	3467.22	4535.00	4500.00
16	SS&EPD	1548 - Voluntary Organisation for maintenance of physically handicapped and mentally retarded children - 78448 - School Uniforms	PE - SSS	72.45	80.00	80.00
17	SS&EPD	2356 - Scholarship and Stipend to handicapped Students	PE - SSS	715.02	1600.00	1600.00
18	SS&EPD	2388 - Other Plan Schemes for welfare of handicapped Students	PE - SSS	2092.75	2908.15	5700.00
19	SS&EPD	3703 - Sweekruti	PE - SSS	0.00	0.00	250.00
20	SS&EPD	3704 - Sahaya	PE - SSS	0.00	0.00	1500.00
21	SS&EPD	3705 - Disha	PE - SSS	0.00	0.00	320.00
22	DM	0922 - Miscellaneous - 41125 - Relief for old and infirm and destitute children	DRMF - SDRF	0.00	0.02	0.02
		Total		20092.56	29114.48	34147.13

Source: Department of Finance, Government of Odisha (2023)

4.1: Mission Vatsalya

Mission Vatsalya is a conditional fiscal transfer from Centre to States under the guiding principle of “Leave No Child Behind”. The Mission focusses on translating the legal commitments – the provisions of the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act of

2012 and the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act of 2015 – into fiscal commitments for ensuring child protection and justice⁵.

To put things in perspective, the evolution of this “umbrella scheme” is critical to look at. Ministry of Women and Child Development implemented this scheme initially as a conditional fiscal transfer by clubbing three schemes – (i) programme for juvenile justice for children in need of care and protection (CNCP), and children in conflict with the Law (CCL); (ii) integrated programme for street children; and scheme for assistance to homes for children (*Shishu Greh*) - in 2009-2010 into a scheme titled as “*Integrated Child Protection Scheme (ICPS)*”, which was renamed as “*Child Protection Services*” in 2017. The erstwhile Child Protection Services (CPS) Scheme later subsumed under *Mission Vatsalya* since 2021-22⁶.

The financing pattern of the programme is in the ratio of 60:40 between Centre and States/Union Territories with Legislature respectively. However the fund sharing pattern is 90:10 for the North-Eastern States viz. Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Sikkim and Tripura and two Himalayan States viz. Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand, and UT of Jammu and Kashmir. For Union Territories without Legislature, it is 100% central share.

Mission Vatsalya primarily promotes family-based non-institutional care of children in difficult circumstances based on the principle of institutionalization of children as a measure of last resort⁷. Family based non-institutional care is provided through adoption, foster care, sponsorship and after-care programs implemented in every district of the country.

Mission Vatsalya is operationalised at three tiers of government in India. At the centre, *Childline India* foundation runs the child help line number 1098 nation-wide providing emergency outreach services. National Institute for Public Cooperation and Child Development (NIPCCD) is responsible for conducting research for the protection of children and also for training personnel to be skilled child protection personnel. Central Adoption Resource Agency (CARA) that caters to adoption of Indian children is a central authority that is based on the Hague convention on Inter-country adoption, 1993 ratified

⁵ [revised ICPS scheme.pdf \(cara.nic.in\)](https://www.cara.nic.in/revised-icps-scheme.pdf)

⁶ For details regarding the institutional structure and the details of scheme convergence of Mission Vatsalya, refer [GUIDELINES OF MISSION VATSALYA DATED 05 JULY 2022.pdf \(wcd.nic.in\)](https://www.wcd.nic.in/GUIDELINES%20OF%20MISSION%20VATSALYA%20DATED%2005%20JULY%202022.pdf)

⁷ [Ministry of Women and Child Development issues Guidelines for Mission Vatsalya Scheme – Odisha Diary \(orissadiary.com\)](https://www.orissadiary.com/Ministry-of-Women-and-Child-Development-issues-Guidelines-for-Mission-Vatsalya-Scheme-Odisha-Diary)

by government of India in 2003. The agency deals with the adoption of orphaned, abandoned and surrendered children in the country through its registered agencies in the country.

In Odisha, *Mission Vatsalya* is implemented through the Odisha State Child Protection Society (OSCPs) at the State level and by the District Child Protection Units (DCPU) at district level. With the passing of Juvenile Justice Act, 2000, it is mandatory to have a child welfare committee and Juvenile Justice Board (JJB) at the district level. Child welfare committee (CWC) shall help children who are in need of care and protection and Juvenile Justice Board shall cater to children who are in conflict with law. District Magistrate is the designated officer that heads the Juvenile Justice Board. A Special Juvenile Police Unit will also work at the district level to handle such child related cases.

Mission Vatsalya is implemented as an intergovernmental fiscal transfer – as conditional grant – with fund sharing from both Centre and States ICPS is implemented in Odisha with financial assistance both from the GoI and GoO. The share of central assistance varies from 35 to 90 *per cent* depending upon the project components: 90 *per cent*: Open shelters run by NGOs; 75 *per cent*: All structural components of State Project Support Unit, State Child Protection Society, State Adoption Resource Agency and District Child Protection Units, all Homes/ Specialised Adoption Agency (SAA) run by Government, all Homes/ SAA run by NGOs; 35 *per cent*: Regulatory bodies provided for under JJ Act (Odisha Accountant General's Office, 2023)

4.2: Odisha Ashirwad Yojana and Biju Shishu Surakshya Yojana

In the post-pandemic fiscal strategy, Odisha announced a scheme – *Odisha Ashirwad Yojana* – to provide financial transfers to children who lost their parents to COVID-19. The budgetary allocation announced in 2023-24 (BE) for *Odisha Ashirwad Yojana* was Rs 5200 lakhs. In the year 2023-24, Revised Estimates for *Ashirwad* was Rs 5000 lakhs when compared to Budget Estimates which was Rs 3500. These estimates are inclusive of another long term State Sponsored Scheme titled *Biju Shishu Suraksha Yojana* which we will revisit to explain the details, after discussing about the recent COVID-19 related *Ashirwad* scheme announced by Chief Minister of Odisha. This is a State-sponsored scheme with Budget Code 78774 in the classification of budgetary transactions.

This financial transfer is given to three categories of children in distress; viz., (i) who have lost both their parents, (ii) who have lost either father or mother and (iii) children whose main earning member of family, either father or mother have died. This is a high frequency fiscal transfer with Rs 2500 every month. The mode of transfer is digital, to the bank account of family members who have taken responsibility of the children after death of their parents. This fiscal transfer will support the child till 18 years or till such a date if somebody adopts him/her.

In addition to targeted fiscal transfer, *Odisha Ashirwad Scheme* supports the children to redress capability deprivation in education and health. As per the provision of the scheme, the children can continue in the same schools or in another school in different city where the relative who has taken responsibility of a child resides. The State Government will help in the admission of the children in *Adarsh Vidyalaya* or central school. The district collector will provide all assistance to the child as per the *Right to Education Act*. The government will also assist such children to pursue higher education under the *Green Passage scheme*. The *Ashirwad* also incorporates the health entitlement for children by providing free treatment under the state government's *Biju Swasthya Kalyan Yojana*.

The Government of Odisha has also taken care of homelessness and food security of these children. The government rules on *Odisha Ashirwad Scheme* states that these children will be also included as beneficiaries under the National Food Security Act. An out of turn allotment will be made to child's relative who has taken the guardianship, if he is eligible for a house under the *Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana* or *Biju Pucca Ghar Yojana*. The relative of the children adopting COVID orphans will be covered under any other government welfare scheme as per his eligibility.

4.2.1: *Biju Sishu Suraksha Yojana for orphan children*

Prior to *Odisha Ashirwad Yojana*, the state government of Odisha had launched a child protection programme for HIV positive orphan children, named as "Biju Sishu Suraksha Yojana (BSSY) and this programme is ongoing since December 2016. The scheme aims to protect children who are without biological or adoptive parents, legal guardians, affected/infected with HIV and found to be most vulnerable. Under the scheme, the state government would provide financial support for children in need of care and protection (CNCP) for their education till higher secondary. The main objective of *Biju Sishu Suraksha Yojana* is to take care and protect such children through rehabilitation.

From gender equity perspective, the component Sukanya *Samridhi Yojana*, providing financial support to girl child beneficiary for her marriage is laudable. An amount of Rs. 1000 is transferred by the government to the bank account of the child from 5 years to the age of 18 years. The lock in period is 21 years while partial withdrawal is available after the girl reaches the age of 18 years and should have completed 10th standard. The scheme is the part of the larger scheme: Beti Bachao Beti Padhao launched in 2015. In addition, a “marriage assistance” component - one time token assistance of Rs 50,000 for girls and Rs 40,000 for boys on completion of 18 and 21 years respectively to facilitate marriage ceremony – is also included under BSSY.

An award for meritorious students – top three performers in academia in matriculation - of Rs.20,000 – is yet another component of BSSY. Each shall be given to meritorious students up to the age of 18 years. From each of the 30 districts, 3 top performers in Academia in class X will be awarded the scholarship into their bank accounts. The children eligible for this assistance are CNCP living in a child care institution. If the child is being provided a similar assistance from any other scheme, an amount higher in any of the two schemes shall be awarded to the child. The scheme is implemented at the district levels where each block level child protection committee, children home and Panchayat level protection committee report to the respective district child protection unit which then reports to the Odisha child protection society for respective deliverables.

4.3: Juvenile Justice Funds

Since Independence, the first uniform national legislation passed for the children was the Juvenile Justice Act, 1986 (JJA, 1986). With this Act, the word ‘child’ was substituted by the word Juvenile (Lok Sabha 2018). Prior to this legislation, States followed their own ‘Children Act’ and the definition of children differed in various states. Only with the passing of the Children Act, 1960, a ‘child’ by definition meant a girl till the age of 18 years and boys till the age of 16 years (Kumari, V. (2016)). With India signing UN Convention on Rights of Children and ratifying it in 1992, a uniform age definition of a child till the age of 18 years was considered essential. Hence, the JJA, 1986 normalised this age group definition of a child and also made use of police stations or jail to keep children under any circumstances illegal.

Nirbhaya rape Case in 2012 intensified the aggression of the public with an involvement of 17 years old being the most brutal and contested for punishment to the

rapists. The protests made the definition of a child contestable and hence, with the passing of new Act called the Juvenile Justice Act, 2015(Kumari, V. (2016)) redefined the definition of the child under special cases. The age of the child as defined by the act is until the age of 18 years. But if the child in between the age of 16-18 years makes a heinous offence, he/she shall be tried as an adult in certain circumstances. This is the most crucial amendment of the JJA, 2015.

The JJA, 2015 applies to children under 2 categories (MLJ 2016):

- a) **Children in conflict with Law (CCL):** this includes children in three categories of crime which are petty, serious and heinous offences.
- b) **Children in need of care and protection(CNCP)**

These are children who are found:

- I. Without home or any settled place
- II. Begging and living on the streets or being forced into child labour
- III. Who resides with a person who is unfit for the child if he abuses and neglected the child, or threatens to kill the child.
- IV. Mentally ill or physically challenged and has no support in the form of parents or guardian or in the case of incapacitated parents/guardian
- V. Who does not have parents or guardian and no one is willing to take care of the child
- VI. Who is missing or runaway child or whose parents have not yet been traced.
- VII. Who is tortured or exploited for sexual abuse
- VIII. Suffered from a civil unrest or natural calamity
- IX. Who is likely to be forced into marriage by the parents/guardians before attaining the age of marriage.

At the state level, The Juvenile Justice Board (JJB) has the responsibility of matters related to Children In Conflict With Law (CCL) and Child Welfare Committee (CWC) has the responsibility to decide on matters related to children in need of care and protection (CNCP). The JJB has one judicial magistrate and 2 social workers. A child psychology practitioner or a practitioner with the degree in sociology law can be elected as a member of the JJB and CWC (Kumari, V. (2016)).

The state government shall institutionalise the JJB in every district to exercise the powers and execute functions related to CCL. On similar lines, the state government shall

appoint one or more CWC in every district as well as on the state level. The committee shall have chairperson and four other members of at least one being a women and other an expert on matters of children. A district child protection unit shall have a secretary and other staff for ad ministerial support. District magistrate shall be the grievance redressal authority for the CWC (MLJ 2016).

The act shall protect the vulnerable children and provide them with basic needs through care, protection, social reintegration through the process of rehabilitation and disposal of matters in best interests of children.

Child-care institutions such as Children homes, observation homes, specialised adoption agency or open shelter must be registered under this act in order to be provided with grants-in-aid from the state government. Children homes, observation homes may be established in every district by the government or non-government organisations for the children. Similarly, for the abandoned, orphaned and surrendered children, rights of having a family shall be restored by a specialised adoption agency which will be setup in every district of the state through adoption or non-institutional care. State Adoption Resource Agency which shall be liable for any redressal from the district adoption resource agency will be registered under this Act. In order to promote inter-country and intra-country adoption, Central Adoption Resource Agency shall be constituted under this act.

The central government by way of grants-in-aid shall provide for the expenditure responsibilities by the concerned authorities under the act. While particularly, the state government shall constitute this fund for the welfare and rehabilitation of the vulnerable children. Such fund can receive voluntary donations, or subscriptions made by any organisation. The fund shall be administered by the concerned department of the state government. The budgetary allocation to this fund was 3 lakhs in 2017-18 followed by 1 lakh from 2018-19 to 2019-20 each. The pandemic year saw the highest jump in the fund of Rs.5 crores in 2020-2021, Rs.3 crores in 2021-22(RE) while Rs.5 crores is budgeted for 2022-23.

Such a fund shall be used for rehabilitation and development programmes for the marginalised children (ENS 2018). This fund could be utilised to provided essential medical care for the needy child, to enhance job skills to make him/her skilled worker and children under the CCL and CNCP. Such children shall be funded from the Juvenile Justice

Fund as one of the sponsored agency for the children (DWCD 2021). Government of Odisha launched Ashirbad scheme for the children who have faced difficulties on or after April 1, 2020 with the loss of both parents, single parent, one parent who was the breadwinner for the family.

For the purpose of rehabilitation and restoration of the child with the actual parents/guardians or foster parents shall be placed in institutional or non-institutional care. Since these funds are designated for children in conflict with law and children in need of care and attention, the funds can be utilised by the state government as per needs of the children in the state. There is certainly a need to check the situation at the district levels where the JJA recommends to have children homes, observation homes either by the government or by a registered NGO. It has been reported that Odisha's juvenile homes are in a poor state (GN Bureau 2016). Also, there is lack of an effective institutional mechanism. Since everything happens at the district level, it is important to build such mechanism in every district and model existing observation homes for better living conditions and vocational certified training to the juveniles (Tripathi 2016). Even children of incarcerated parents need special attention (Panda and Chachra 2022). Since, the funds are at the discretion of the state government so there is no framework for spending. Hence, the effectiveness evaluation can be taken up in the next phase of research.

The JJA, 2015 demands coordination and cooperation among departments of the state governments to protect children. This is why the NGO are encouraged to register under the Portal of government. Only by doing this, the NGO are eligible for grants in aid from the state government. Since the Funds are flexible for use for children, it provides room for the state government departments to utilise them as per the JJA, 2015 mandate and the needs of the state.

4.4: Special Court under POCSO Act (Fast Track Special Courts (FTSCs))

POCSO Act, 2012 is called as Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act, 2012 that came into force on November 14, 2012. Relevance criterion of evaluation is justified as it is a comprehensive law that protects children from sexual assault, pornography and sexual harassment by ensuring healthy physical, emotional and social development among children. POCSO Act provides legal provisions to strengthen the protection and wellbeing for children. The act defines a child as any person below the age of 18 years and provides strict punishments under heinous offences of sexual exploitation, abuse or

pornography. The schemes address SDG Goal 5 of Gender Equality by eliminating all sorts of violence against children and Goal 16 of Promoting peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels.

Special Courts under POCSO Act is an Administrative Expenditure under Establishment, Operations and Management that is under the aegis of the Home Department, Odisha. The allocation for setting up FTSCs was only 4 crores in 2020-2021 (Actuals), which was substantially increased to Rs. 37 crores in 2021-22 (RE) and is budgeted close to Rs. 40 crores in 2022-2023 (BE). This is a centrally sponsored scheme aimed at building infrastructure facilities across the country by the Department of Justice. Special courts are mandated by the act to record evidence within a period of 30 days and close the case within one year if possible. National Commission on Child rights and State Commission on Child Rights are the designated authorities for effective implementation of the act.

In 2017, the state government of Odisha made the court of Additional Sessions judge in each of 30 districts as special courts under POCSO Act, 2012. However, there has been successive delay in cases under POCSO Act every year. Presently, 22 POCSO courts are functional in Odisha which were virtually launched in 2021. These courts were launched in district Cuttack, Balasore, Bhadrak, Balangir, Dhenkanal, Ganjam, Jagatsinghpur, Jajpur, Kalahandi, Kendrapara, Khurda, Koraput, Kandhamal, Rayagada and Sambalpur. In order to expedite the issues related to CAB (Child Sexual Abuse), 1023 fast track special courts (FTSCs) have been intended to be setup in every district of the country out of which 389 exclusive POCSO courts are functional under Department of Justice (DoJ). 640 FTSCs have been operational in 26 states/UTs as per PIB (July,30, 2021).

When the child is rescued from an offender or any such information is revealed, the information is passed over to the special juvenile police unit or the local police. The police if assesses that the child is in need of care and protection shall provide with the same and report the case to the Child Welfare Committee and the Special court within 24 hours. The child welfare committee at the state and district level can coordinate and seek justice on behalf of the child. The child identity shall not be disclosed and shall ensure that the child is not called too many times in the court and prevent any character assassination of the child (POCSO Act, 2012). The Act was amended in 2019 with the addition of more

severe punishment i.e. death penalty in case of sexual crimes committed on children and protect them.

For the purpose of speedy trial, the state government in consultation with the chief justice of the high court designates a court in every district possible or Court of Session to be special court for this purpose. There shall be a special public prosecutor for every special court who is a child-psychology expert and is a regular child psychology practitioner with experience. The court is mandated to provide child-friendly atmosphere in the court. The child identity shall not be disclosed and shall ensure that the child is not called too many times in the court and prevent any character assassination of the child (POCSO Act, 2012). The Act was amended in 2019 with the addition of more severe punishment i.e. death penalty in case of sexual crimes committed on children and protect them.

Special courts are mandated by the act to record evidence within a period of 30 days and close the case within one year if possible. National Commission on Child rights and State Commission on Child Rights are the designated authorities for effective implementation of the act. However, the mandate to have a special court in every district has not yet setup which is leading to delay in disposal of the registered cases (Juyal S et al. (2017). As of 2018, total cases to be investigated were 54,924 which is 22% higher than the caseload in 2017. The percentage has increased further by 19% (54,924 to 65,184)

4.5: *Implementation of Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act,1986*

The act prohibits the engagement of children in certain employments and to regulate the condition of work of children in certain other employments. Hence, it takes care of SDG3,5,8 & 10. The constitutional mandate ensures that the children are given opportunities to develop in a healthy manner. No child below the age of 14 shall be employed in any industry, ensuring quality education to children between the age 6-14 yrs of age, duty of the state to maintain health of children and raise the level of nutrition among children. Due to widespread unemployment, Children are forced to work and most of them are engaged in Agriculture, Beedi rolling, labeling and packaging, Collection and processing of minor forest produce, Forest timber operations, Hotels/motels/road side dhabas, Domestic help, Collection and assembly of charcoal and coal, Cattle and goat rearing, Operations in motor garages, Operations in brick kilns, Operations in stone

quarries, Stone crushing, Fire works, Weaving and dying, Rag picking, Wood processing, Clay image making, Transport operations, Loading and unloading in mining areas, Building and construction operations, Biscuit and Bread making, Selling of country liquor, Cotton ginning, Cycle/automobiles repairs and Shops & commercial establishment.

The state continues to spend Rs. 1-3 crores for the implementation of the child Labour Act, 1986. However, it is imperative to know how many children are rescued through the implementation. This can be assessed through the next phase of research to understand the implications. Ensuring smooth coordination is an intense exercise requiring constant monitoring, review and support. Strengthening of capacities of state and district-level institutions will enable a strong understanding and necessary adaptation to local conditions of strategies they will use to eliminate child labour. It will enable co-ordination and monitoring of partners during implementation.

Coordination and concentration are the two main objectives of the action plan for children. The relevant departments are nested to provide adequate conditions to the children and help in upliftment of these children. Internal coherence can also be seen in the way the scheme is implemented. At the State level, State Resource Cell (SRC) on Child Labour has been set up under the guidance of Labour Commissioner, Odisha for coordination of activities. The Department of Labour, as Nodal Department, has taken initiatives for facilitating inter-departmental convergence to eliminate child labour. State Action Plan for elimination of child labour is present that aimed at eliminating child labour by 2014 and reintegration of children into the society with universal education access with a time line of 2013-14. The target is the child labourer but within the context of her/his family and community. At State level, the focus is on strengthening the enabling environment including the capacities of governmental agencies and other institutions and organizations such as trade unions that operate at that level, as well as the linkages between them. At national level, the focus is on replication and policy so that the experiences generated at District and State level can be extended beyond the five target states. This will be done through building the knowledge base and facilitating mainstreaming of child labour issues in national development plans, as well as the DWCP and UNDAF efforts.

Structure of DLTF

- Collector and District Magistrate of the district – Chairman;
- Additional District Magistrate – Member;

- Superintendent of Police – Member;
- District Social Welfare Officer – Member;
- District Health / Medical Officer – Member;
- A representative of District Small Industries Development Corporation or General Manager, DIC – Member
- Chairman of the Child Welfare Committee – Member;
- An NGO who is actively involved in the rescue and rehabilitation of working children of the area – Member;
- District Labour Officer – Convenor

Odisha has been doing applaudable work in elimination of child marriage with the help of District Level Task Force headed by the collector in chosen district and have had meaningful impacts on the lives of children through sustained awareness campaigns with the help of voluntary organisations in the targeted districts (Sahu 2021). This was done by launching a five year SSAP Blueprint to end child marriage completely. This was also helpful by active involvement of anganwadi workers and other social health activists. This was also made possible through continuous coordination among the departments.

Between January and August, the government declared 5,661 villages as “child-marriage free”. Kandhamal district has the highest number such villages (1,739), followed by Ganjam (1,172), Subarnapur (741), Rayagada (559), Nabarangpur (438) and Deogarh (370). A similar kind of activism can be taken up for child labour that can help eliminate child labour completely.

A detailed matrices answering the relevant questions under each criterion is also provided below. The main aim to present the available information for the policy intervention in a clearer and more subtle manner. This then essentially helps us to identify the key areas and gaps that need attention and hold importance for effective implementation.

4.6: ICDS: Early Childhood Development (Scheme Vatsalya)

The scheme is a state-sponsored program directed to the early childhood development. In the form of campaign, it was launched on 17th November, 2020 for 17.94 lakh children under the age of three as nutritional and convergence services during Covid-19. The scheme is one-of-a-kind scheme that shall ensure a healthy adulthood through

effective parent led, homebased care in the early years of the child for the cognitive development. Keeping this ideology in perspective, its main objective is to sensitize parents and facilitators to work towards the optimal development of the children through care and stimulation in the early years of child in order to build a strong foundation to adulthood (GoO, 2021).

The components of the scheme are listed below:

1. Parental Outreach
2. Capacity Building of Facilitators and parents
3. Preparation and use of low-cost materials by the parents for the children
4. Involving men in child-rearing through mainstreaming
5. Kuni Calendar (a calendar of activities with focus on psycho-social, physical and motor, language, creative aspects of ECD) and Responsive Parenting Posters
6. Having a multilingual approach for effective reach.
7. Messaging through comprehended IEC/SBCC materials including use of the WCD mascot
8. Tiki Mausi to motivate parents and children alike proposed to institutionalize care & stimulation of children under threes.
9. A child Assessment card

The programme runs through Anganwadi centres at the village level. The AWCs act as child friendly centres solving the problem of disparities due to residence. Since all the children below the age of 3 years are covered through the existing AWCs, the accessibility issues are resolved and hence they act as AWCs-cum-creches. The scheme has been launched during Covid and is part of nutritional and convergence services. Since schools were shut delaying the learning outcomes for children, such a scheme aims to provide effective parent led homebased care in the early years of the child for the cognitive development.

There has been a positive affirmation towards building Odisha State Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) Council along with a robust interdepartmental convergence mechanism to track the progress and synergise interactions for better convergence. Moreover, since it's a new scheme, child friendly model AWC 'Prarambhik' has been setup at Anganwadi training centre in Bhubaneswar. This shall be the benchmark for the other AWCs to begin working in this direction. Not only the coherence

evaluation shall be addressed externally but also internally wherein the AWCs shall be coordinating to develop capacity and promote cooperation.

The effectiveness evaluation can be understood by analysing how many AWCs have operationalized the scheme. Since the scheme follows multi-lingual approach for effective reach, the programme encourages more inclusion of parents along with children in this scheme. This itself serves as a catalyst for achieving optimal development of children rights from their homes and with their parents. Moreover, the scheme envisages to involve men in child rearing through mainstreaming them in the activities for children. Such an initiative shall help in addressing gender inequalities and inherent equity gaps. Since it's a new scheme, more understanding can be built once the stakeholders/ officers can help us understand the scale of Implementation and the resource requirements in the next phase of the research.

The campaign Vatsalya is intended to enhance psycho-social and cognitive development among children that promotes early childhood education falls under the scheme Integrated Child Development Program. The campaign is a program expenditure under the state sponsored scheme. For the year 2021-2022(RE), Rs. 2 cr. and Rs. 3 cr. is budgeted for the year 2022-23(BE) by the state government of Odisha. Scheme Vatsalya is a promising campaign to enhance psycho-social and cognitive development among children at an early stage of childhood. This aims to build a stronger base for children to build up their future and catalyze the growth potential in them.

5. Efficiency and Effectiveness: Applying OECD DAV Criteria

The OECD criteria of efficiency and effectiveness relates to the trends in receipt and utilisation of funds. The fiscal marksmanship estimates and PEFA scores are also reported to capture the effectiveness of child protection related public spending.

The analysis of budgets for Odisha State Child Protection Societies during the five years from 2016-17 to 2020-21 revealed that the percentage of utilisation of available funds was continually decreasing from 70.47 *per cent* in 2016-17 to 31.60 *per cent* in 2020-21 (Accountant General's Office, Government of Odisha, 2023).

**Table 8: Receipt and utilisation of funds by Odisha State Child Protection Society
(₹ in crore)**

Year	Opening Balance	Received from		Interest and other receipts	Total funds available	Utilisation	Percentage of utilisation	Closing Balance
		GoI	GoO					
2016-17	40.00	22.79	16.07	3.07	81.93	57.74	70.47	24.19
2017-18	24.19	18.15	13.73	6.40	62.47	29.47	47.17	33.00
2018-19	33.00	41.22	34.38	2.33	110.93	49.82	44.91	61.11
2019-20	61.11	35.41	27.57	5.19	129.28	47.52	36.76	81.76
2020-21	81.76	37.64	27.56	23.80	170.76	53.96	31.60	116.80
Total	--	155.21	119.31	40.79	--	238.51		--

Source: Government of Odisha (2023)

The unutilised balance in 13 components were more than ₹ one crore in each component, as shown in Table 8. The non-utilisation of funds available with the OSCPS was due to unutilised components in infrastructure and human resources in CCIs (Table 9).

Table 9: Details of Unutilized balances, as of March 2021

Sl. No.	Particulars of Head	Purpose	Closing Balance (₹ in crore)
1.	NGO run Children's Home	For maintenance of CCIs run by NGOs	33.02
2.	District Child Protection Units	For expenditure to be made by DCPUs	18.49
3.	Construction Grant by GoO	Funds to be utilised for construction and maintenance of CCIs run by Government.	11.69
4.	Non-GIA Children's Fund	The fund to be given to Non-GIA CCIs of their utilisation.	11.50
5.	Juvenile Justice Boards	For expenditure on JJB	7.95
6.	Observation and Special Home (Govt. run Home)/ Utkal Balashram (Govt. run Children's Home)	Funds OH and SH and Utkal for Balashram	4.52
7.	Odisha State Child Protection Society	Funds to be utilised by OSCPS	3.85
8.	Received from Others	No specific	3.29
9.	Specialised Adoption Agencies(SAAs)	For management of SSA	1.68
10.	Child Welfare Committees	For child welfare expenditure committees in CCIs	1.45

11.	Biju Surakshya Yojana	It is fund to be utilised for “Biju Surakshya Yojana” to provide support to the vulnerable children.	1.16
12.	Interest received from Bank	Due to parking and accumulation of fund in the savings bank without utilisation.	13.75
13.	Received from Flexi Fund	Interest earned from bank deposits	3.44
Total			115.79

Source: Government of Odisha (2023): Records of Odisha State Child Protection Society (OSCPS)

5.1: PEFA Scores

Budget credibility is tested based on the PEFA score A to D, denoting a variation of 5-15+ per cent in the Actuals expenditures outturn of the Budgeted expenditure⁸. Table 10 presents the PEFA score for the department wise child-centric allocations incurred in the child budget of the state. The score is calculated by taking out the difference of the Actuals from the budget estimates of child budget statement for the year 2021-22. For the year 2022-2023, PEFA scores are calculated based on budget and revised estimates.

Table 10: PEFA Score for child-centric expenditures for the year 2021-22 & 2022-23

S. No.	Department	2021-22		2022-2023	
		%age Deviation	PEFA Score	%age Deviation	PEFA Score
1	Home				
	Child-related Expenditures	64.0	D	25.6	D
	Total Budget	11.3	C	0.1	A
2	School and Mass Education				
	Child-related Expenditures	10.0	C	2.4	A
	Total Budget	10.0	C	2.3	A

⁸ Technical notes of PEFA are given in Annexure 4

S. No.	Department	2021-22		2022-2023	
		%age Deviation	PEFA Score	%age Deviation	PEFA Score
3	Scheduled Trib es and Scheduled Cast e Development, Minorities and Backward Classes Welfare				
	Child-related Expenditures	7.9	B	0.8	A
	Total Budget	14.8	C	2.7	A
4	Health and Family Welfare				
	Child-related Expenditures	249.9	D	115.2	D
	Total Budget	13.7	C	4.9	A
5	Labour & Empl oyees State Insurance				
	Child-related Expenditures	48.3	D	0.0	A
	Total Budget	28.8	D	6.9	B
6	Sports & Youth Services				
	Child-related Expenditures	9941.7	D	12911.0	D
	Total Budget	45.1	D	56.6	D
7	Women & Child Development				
	Child-related Expenditures	13.0	C	7.7	B
	Total Budget	9.7	B	1.0	A
8	Higher Education				
	Child-related Expenditures	28.5	D	5.0	B
	Total Budget	9.2	B	5.4	B
9	Social Security & Empowerment of persons with Disability				
	Child-related Expenditures	28.9	D	28.3	D

S. No.	Department	2021-22		2022-2023	
		%age Deviation	PEFA Score	%age Deviation	PEFA Score
	Total Budget	17.8	D	0.1	A
10	Works				
	Child-related Expenditures	0.6	A	0.0	A
	Total Budget	8.1	B	3.8	A
11	Rural Development				
	Child-related Expenditures	100.0	D	0.0	A
	Total Budget	30.4	D	3.6	A
12	Law				
	Child-related Expenditures	0.0	A	0.0	A
	Total Budget	15.1	D	15.0	D
13	Disaster Management				
	Total Budget	48.6	D	1.0	A

Note: Score 'A' = Actuals expenditures outturn lies between 95% and 105% of the Budgeted expenditure; . 'B' = 90-110%; 'C' = 85-115%; 'D' is given if performance is less than required for a C score (PEFA, 2018).

Source: (Basic data) Odisha State Budgets; Authors' calculations

The results reveal that, at an aggregate level, only child-centric allocations from the Works Department have a score of 'A'. The total budget of the Works department shows a deviation of 8.1% from the budget estimates scoring a 'B.' Scheduled Tribes and Scheduled Caste Development, Minorities and Backward Classes Welfare department's actual expenditure outturn score a 'B' with a deviation of 7.9%. The percentage deviation of the total budget of the department scores a 'C'.

The percentage deviation between budgeted and the actual estimates is more than 10% for School and Mass Education Department and Department of Women and Child development scoring a 'C'. Further, Home, Health and Family Welfare, Sports and Youth Services, Rural Development and Disaster Management Department score a 'D' pertaining to large percentage deviation of the actual Expenditures from the Budget estimates. The large deviations in the disaster management account for the fund transfer for the

unforeseen events as also seen in the fiscal marksmanship analysis. Labour & Employees State Insurance department, Higher Education Department, Social Security and Empowerment of Persons with Disability department are also given a score 'D'. The scores are also calculated for the total budget of these departments for the year 2021-22. When there is huge deviation between estimated and actuals, it affects the fiscal space available to design child related spending programmes.

For the year 2022-23, on child-centric allocations, School, and Mass Education; Law; Rural development, Labour & Employees State Insurance; Scheduled Tribes and Scheduled Caste Development, Minorities and Backward Classes Welfare department have a score 'A' indicating deviation less than 5%. Departments that score a 'D' are Home; Health and Family Welfare; Sports and Youth Services; Social Security & Empowerment of persons with Disability and Disaster Management departments. Disaster management and Sports and Youth Services show large deviation in the revised estimates⁹. Women and Child Development Department score a 'B' reporting 5% deviation in revised estimates as compared to the budget estimates. For majority of the 13 departments, the total budget deviation is quite low and have a score 'A'.

We observe that the year 2021-22 is seen as the period of economic recovery while dealing with the natural disasters at the same time, Odisha's state finances have also faced challenges in terms of rationalization of expenditures owing to low revenue collections. Owing to these events, the budget credibility of these departments undertaking child-centric allocations has been affected badly. However, a realistic budgetary forecast keeping in mind the contingencies should be the key to regain budget credibility.

Additionally, Table 10 provides ratios for BE/Actuals and RE/Actuals. As is evident from the table 11, following the COVID-19 pandemic, virtually all the schemes exhibit overestimation (i.e. underspending).

⁹ Large deviations are seen on account of the deviation in the Budget estimates and the actuals for the year 2021-22. As per the BE 2021-22, 0.04 lakhs were budgeted for the Disaster Management Department. However, the Actuals of 2021-22 have an expenditure allocation of Rs. 4774 lakhs as child-centric expenditures

Table 11 Fiscal Marksmanship Ratios of Child protection Schemes in Odisha: Time Series

Scheme	Year	BE	RE	Actuals	Fiscal Ratios	Marksmanship
Scheme	Year	Rs Thousands			BE/Actuals	RE/Actuals
ICPS	2017	617000	117000	308500	2.00	0.379
	2018	617000	617000	724548	0.85	0.85
	2019	768500	768500	604341	1.27	1.27
	2020	768500	768500	563385	1.36	1.36
CL	2017	10000	10000	10000	1.00	1.00
	2018	15000	15000	15000	1.00	1.00
	2019	34000	34000	33999	1.00	1.00
	2020	28500	28500	28499	1.00	1.00
BSSY	2017	27500	27500	27500	1.00	1.00
	2018	16500	16500	16500	1.00	1.00
	2019	16500	4500	16500	1.00	0.27
	2020	60000	60000	60000	1.00	1.00
JJF	2017	300	300	300	1.00	1.00
	2018	100	100	100	1.00	1.00
	2019	100	100	100	1.00	1.00
	2020	50000	50000	50000	1.00	1.00
SV	2017	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
	2018	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
	2019	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
	2020	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
POCSO	2017	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
	2018	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
	2019	NA	57928	0	NA	NA
	2020	325846	325846	42228	7.71	7.71

Source: (Basic data), Finance Accounts (various years), Government of Odisha, Author's calculations.

In nearly all the schemes, the actual expenditures were less than the budgeted amount. For instance, in 2020, just 12% of the budgeted amount was spent on the POCSO scheme.

This is revealing in light of the fact that there is empirical evidence that children suffered the most due to pandemic.

Partitioning the budget forecasting errors to understand the sources of error – whether it is random or not – is based on Theil's inequality coefficient. Theil's U, this provides a measure of how well a time series of estimated values compares to observed values. The data of two out of the six schemes, namely, POCSO and SV was not sufficient to determine Theil's U, so have been dropped. For the remaining four, extent as well as components of error have been calculated (Table 12). It can be inferred based on data from Table 11 that the extent of forecasting errors is quite low. The value of U1 was highest for ICPS. For the schemes JJF and BSSY, U1 is 0 for BE/Actual indicating a perfect forecast.

Table 12 Fiscal Marksmanship Estimates: Theil's U estimates

Scheme	BE/Actual	RE/Actual
ICPS	0.16537	0.14288
CLA	0.00001	0.00001
BSSY	0.000	0.08684
JJF	0.00	0.00

Note: U_1 takes on a value between 0 and 1, where 0 indicates a perfect forecast

Source: (Basic data), Finance Accounts (2023), Government of Odisha

The sources of errors may be separated into two categories: (a) errors due to miscalculation and poor judgement, and (b) errors due to unexpected and external shocks. The former can occur in part due to incorrect estimates of key budgeting parameters, such as tax and expenditure elasticities, and in part due to erroneous estimates of key economic variables, such as national income, investment, savings, inflation, etc., which influence government revenue and expenditures (Kumari, and Bhattacharya, 1988).

Table 13 gives the results obtained after bifurcating the errors in budgeted estimates into systematic and random component. Both bias and unequal variation are components of systematic error. The random error in both ICPS and CLA is less than the systematic component. For ICPS the proportion of systematic error is 0.5934 whereas for CLA this component is 0.964. The random error for ICPS is 0.4066 and for CLA the same is 0.0364.

In both the schemes, the systematic error was higher than the random component and are reducible with better forecasting methods. BSSY and JJF are perfectly forecasted and hence, their error components cannot be computed.

Table 13 Child Protection Schemes in Odisha: Partitioning the Sources of Forecasting Error (Budget Estimates)

Scheme	Bias	Unequal variation	Random
ICPS	0.4625	0.1309	0.4066
CLA	0.5000	0.4636	0.0364
BSSY	Perfect Forecast	Perfect Forecast	Perfect Forecast
JJF	Perfect Forecast	Perfect Forecast	Perfect Forecast

Source: (Basic data), Finance Accounts (2023), Government of Odisha

Table 14 gives the results obtained after bifurcating the errors in revised estimates into a systematic and random component. The random error in both ICPS and BSSY is more than the systematic component whereas it is less than the systematic error in case of CLA. The proportion of systematic error in ICPS, CLA and BSSY is 0.4687, 0.9636 and 0.4719 respectively. The random component is beyond the forecaster's control. JJF is perfectly forecasted and hence, the error components cannot be computed.

Table 14 Child Protection Schemes in Odisha: Partitioning the Sources of Forecasting Error (Revised Estimates)

Scheme	Bias	Unequal variation	Random
ICPS	0.0105	0.4582	0.5313
CLA	0.5000	0.4636	0.0364
BSSY	0.2500	0.2219	0.5281
JJF	Perfect Forecast	Perfect Forecast	Perfect Forecast

Source: (Basic data), Finance Accounts (2023), Government of Odisha

For Budgeted estimates, there is space for improvement of forecast error since the systematic component is greater than the random component. This implies that the fiscal marksmanship may be enhanced by using more effective policy innovations to manage the tight fiscal space within the fiscal regulations. Revised estimates, on the other hand,

have a limited space for improvement in forecast error, since the random components of most of them are greater than the systematic component.

We conducted fiscal marksmanship and PEFA exercises for six child protection schemes in the state of Odisha to understand the budget credibility. The results revealed that there is significant deviation between BE, RE and Actuals for a selected schemes on child protection in Odisha. The findings of fiscal marksmanship analysis indicate that the proportion of error due to systematic component has been significantly higher than the random component in case of budgeted estimates. This has policy consequences, since the systematic component of forecasting error can be reduced by using better forecasting methods. However, for the revised estimates, the random component was found out to be greater than the systematic component in majority of the child protection schemes in Odisha.

6. Impact and Sustainability: The Theory of Change

The overarching questions that OECD DA evaluation matrices seek to is to what extent has the Child Protection interventions been relevant, effective, coherent, efficient and sustainable in addressing concerns related to children in need of care and protection (CNCPP) and child in conflict of law (CCL) in Odisha through specifically targeted programmes. To answer this, a theory of change articulates the development “impact” using the World Bank Group’s Independent Evaluation Group (IEG) framework.

The theory of change in Table 15 links the various child protection interventions with outputs and intended outcomes and impacts. The theory of change helps to provide policy advice to and framework for an improved outcome and impact, which helps in policy dialogues. Translating outputs to outcome through increased State support to children in need of care and protection and children in conflict of law results in human capital formation, and in turn crucial for the economic development. The OECD DA evaluation we followed in the study involving six fiscal instruments to address child protection encompassing the intergovernmental fiscal transfers and state specific programmes across different sectors. The strategic mapping of flow of funds and utilisation ratio of the funds has been carried out to analyse the financial inputs. Monitoring outcome than inputs is crucial to examine the impacts of a fiscal intervention for child protection.

Table 15: Theory of Change – Fiscal Outcomes and Child Protection Impact Matrix

Activities	Output	Outcomes	Impacts
Emergency outreach service through 'CHILDLINE'	Establish and strengthen a continuum of services for emergency outreach, institutional care, family and community based care, counselling and support services;	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children living in vulnerable situations will have access to Child Protection services by means of greater awareness at the family and community level An increasing number of abandoned children will be placed in family-based non-institutional/alternative care such as adoption or foster care, rather than languishing in institutions Children in institutional care will have better standards of care and quality services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> to contribute to the improvements in the well-being of children in difficult circumstances the reduction of vulnerabilities to situations and actions that lead to abuse, neglect, exploitation, abandonment and separation of children
Open shelters for children in need in urban and semi-urban areas	Put in place and strengthen necessary structures and mechanisms for effective implementation of the scheme at the national, regional, state and district levels		
Family based non institutional care through Sponsorship, Foster-care, Adoption and Aftercare	Build capacities of families and community to strengthen care, protection and response to children;		
Institutional services like shelter homes, children's homes, observation homes, special home	established and functioning structures at all government levels for delivery of statutory and support services to children in difficult circumstances		
General grant-in-aid for need based/ innovative interventions	introduced and operational evidence based monitoring and evaluation.		
Statutory support services like Child Welfare Committees & Juvenile Justice Boards	clearly articulated responsibilities and enforced accountability for child protection		
Human resource development for strengthening counselling services	Sensitize and train members of allied systems including, local bodies, police, judiciary and other concerned departments of State Governments to undertake responsibilities under the ICPS		
Training and capacity building	Build capacities of all functionaries including, administrators and service providers, at all levels working under the ICPS;		
Strengthening the knowledge-base	Create mechanisms for a child protection data management system including MIS and child tracking system in the country for effective implementation and monitoring of child protection services		
Advocacy, public education and communication	raised public awareness about the reality of child rights, situation and protection in India		
Monitoring at district, state and central levels	improved access to and quality of child protection services		

The three Tables in the annexure gives a detailed analysis of how well all the six schemes in consideration are fitting to OECD evaluation criteria based on the extant government data or academic literature for specific key evaluation question (KEQ) for each criterion and further, identify the KEQs which remain unanswered through M_1 and M_2 . In all the

three tables, column 'M₁' indicates information on KEQ based on Government documents used to source such information are Budget, Responses to Parliament questions, Ministerial reports and necessary official guidelines of Government. 'M₂' gives the similar information based on existing literature including research papers, policy briefs, reports and newspapers articles. M₃ provides the information and data collected through field visits.

All the six schemes are bifurcated in 3 tables where Table A1 evaluates ICPS and JJA, Table A₂ evaluates BSSY and POCSO and lastly, Table A₃ evaluates SV and LA.

7. Conclusion

The Child Budgeting in Odisha for Budget 2023-24 revealed that the State spends on education (68.27 %), health (13.25 %), development (9.13 %) and protection (10.04 %). Strengthening the public social infrastructure investment in child-friendly and shock-responsive social protection mechanisms are significant fiscal policy interventions to protect children from living in abject poverty and increase coping up mechanisms and resistance from experiencing prolonged vulnerabilities. We analyse "child protection" from this broader perspective.

Against this backdrop, we unpack the "protection" component of child budgeting in Odisha focusing on six government schemes using Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) evaluation framework. We examined the five child protection schemes in the context of Odisha, namely (i) Integrated Child Protection Scheme (Mission Valsalya) (ii) clubbed programme of Odisha Ashirwad Yojana and Biju Shishu Surakshya Yojana, (iii) Juvenile Justice Funds, (v) Special Court under POCSO Act (Fast Track Special Courts (FTSCs), and (v) Implementation of Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act,1986.

Analysing the six child protection schemes for project design and objectives and activities, results indicators, and drivers for success and failure have been carried out through desk reviews of government policy strategy and budget documents and a review of available reports and literature on the fiscal interventions for child protection by Government of Odisha. These are arranged in scheme-specific matrices in this paper. Using OECD evaluation criteria, we analysed six child protection schemes of Odisha out of the total 23 child protection schemes in Odisha across various sectors.

The intergovernmental fiscal transfers and State specific programmes designed for “children in need of care and protection” and “children in conflict of law” are evaluated for its relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability. The delays in funds from the centre and the low utilisation ratios are identified as the challenges in effective implementation of child protection programmes in Odisha. Overall the programmes have been relevant and effective in terms of addressing the concerns of children in the post pandemic fiscal strategy of Odisha, and also fiscally sustainable through public expenditure convergence over time. The gender equity addressed in the child protection schemes are laudable.

The child protection schemes are designed and implemented to reach the human development outcome and impacts, within overall framework of UN Sustainable Development Goals. The theory of change depicts the various fiscal interventions for child protection with activities, outputs, intended outcomes and impacts. The theory of change helps to assist policy dialogues with an analytical backdrop. Translating financial inputs into outputs and outcome through effective State support to children in need of care and protection and children in conflict of law are significant for the economic development.

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Annex 1: Technical Notes on PEFA Methodology

PEFA is a methodological framework to assess how the PFM act as a driver to achieve intended outcomes. PEFA identifies 31 indicators out of the seven pillars as key elements of a PFM system. All the 31 indicators¹⁰ are scored on a four point ordinal scale; A, B, C, D according to specific criteria mentioned for each dimension. In our case, the indicator is aggregate expenditure outturn (P1-1) of the Budget reliability pillar (P1). This indicator measures the extent to which aggregate expenditure outturn differs from the budget originally approved for the item in the budget in last three completed fiscal years for which data is available and two immediately preceding years. Using the PEFA framework to assess public financial management, 2016, we explain the criteria below briefly through an example.

Step 1: We take the three fiscal years of assessment as mentioned in Table 1.

Table 1 - Fiscal years for assessment	
Year 1	2001/02
Year 2	2002/03
Year 3	2003/04

Step 2: Based on the [template](#) to calculate the PEFA score for P1: Total expenditure outturn, as per the budget head, we list the budgeted and actual expenditures and calculate the difference. We then take the absolute value of the difference and then calculating percent deviation from the budget estimate. An example is presented in table 2 below. The columns of the table 2 are defined as follows:

A= Budget Estimates for a dimension

B= Actuals of the dimension

C= Actuals- Budget Estimates

D= Absolute Value of Actuals- Budget Estimates= | Actuals- Budget Estimates|

$$F = \left\{ \frac{\text{Actuals} - \text{Budget Estimates}}{\text{Budget Estimates}} \right\} \times 100$$

¹⁰ Table 2 of [PEFA 2016 latest version with links \(2\).pdf](#)

Table 2: Data for year = 2000-01

Functional head	Budget (A)	Actual (B)	Difference (C)= (B)-(A)	Absolute (D)= ABS(C)	Percent (E)= (D)/(A)
1	1048	779	-269	269	25.7%
2	112	110	-2	2	1.8%
3	134	131	-3	3	2.2%
4	342	355	13	13	3.8%
5	286	244	-42	42	14.7%
6	28	16	-12	12	42.9%
7	191	119	-72	72	37.7%
8	48	31	-17	17	35.4%
9	103	35	-68	68	66.0%
10	339	267	-72	72	21.2%
11	100	123	23	23	23.0%
12	46	46	0	0	0.0%
13	387	367	-20	20	5.2%
14	96	122	26	26	27.1%
15	0.5	0.5	0	0	0.0%
16			0	0	#DIV/0!
17			0	0	#DIV/0!
18			0	0	#DIV/0!
19			0	0	#DIV/0!
20			0	0	#DIV/0!
21 (= sum of rest)			0	0	#DIV/0!
total expenditure	3260.5	2745.5	-515	515	15.8%
composition variance	3260.5	2745.5		639 (sum of ABS(C)	19.6%

Step 3: Similar tables are generated for the next two years and percentage deviations are calculated. This results in the composite matrix for representation for each year (table 3).

Table 3 - Results Matrix

	for PI-1	
year	total exp. deviation	total exp. variance
2001/02	15.8%	19.6%
2002/03	3.7%	16.5%
2003/04	8.0%	13.3%

Step 4: Based on the deviations, we put a score on the degree of variation in the expenditure outturn. The details of demarcation of scores in presented below in table 4.

Table 4: Criteria for P1-1

Score	Minimum requirement for scores
A	Aggregate expenditure outturn falls between 95-105% of the approved budget expenditures in at least 2 of the 3 years of assessment.
B	Aggregate expenditure outturn falls between 90-110% of the approved budget expenditures in at least 2 of the 3 years of assessment.
C	Aggregate expenditure outturn falls between 85-115% of the approved budget expenditures in at least 2 of the 3 years of assessment.
D	Performance is less than required for a C score.

Since the deviation for P1-1 is within 10% for two of the three years, it is given the score of 'B'.

Reference Links for PEFA Technical Notes:

1. Public Expenditure and Financial Accountability (PEFA), 2016. Framework for assessing public financial management. Washington, DC: PEFA Secretariat. [*PEFA 2016 latest version with links \(2\).pdf](#)
2. Calculation Sheets for PEFA Performance Indicators PI-1, PI-2 and PI-2.3, November 2018. [Calculation Sheets for PEFA Performance Indicators PI-1, PI-2 and PI-2.3, November 2018 | Public Expenditure and Financial Accountability \(PEFA\)](#).

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