CREATING A CHILD FRIENDLY WORLD!
"The Soul of India Lives in its Villages"
- Mahatma Gandhi

...yet children continue to suffer in villages.

On 26 March, 2017 a mine collapsed in a small village of Indian State of Jharkhand, where a 10 year old girl child was buried alive while mining.
Satyarthi Movement for Children, India
Bal Mitra Gram (BMG)/Child Friendly Village

- Long term, holistic and sustainable model
- Quality education for all children
- Reinforced Child rights
- Empowered communities
- No child labour
- No gender discrimination
- Safe and healthy environment
- Equity and social justice for all
- Instilling democratic values
### Core Values of BMG

- Safe and secure *childhood*
- *Educated* and literate society
- *Compassion* for all
- *Gender* sensitization
- No taboos/ No superstitions/ No *social evils*
- Social Justice and inclusion
- Democratic *participation of children and communities*
- Clean and healthy living *environment*

### Structure of BMG

- BMG is a cluster/single village unit
- Average number of households: **120 - 150**
- Average household size: **5 - 6 family members**
- Average number of children in a BMG: **200 - 250**
BMG: The Guiding Principles

The fundamental parts of a BMG

- All child labourers are withdrawn from work
- All children are enrolled in and attending school
- Ensuring Child Participation in Democratic Decision-Making: Children form a **Bal Panchayat** (an elected Children’s Village Council)
- The **Bal Panchayat** is officially recognized by the **Gram Panchayat** (elected Adult Village Council) for ensuring comprehensive development
- **Empowering communities** including women and youth, marginalised, vulnerable and minority sections.

Which can lead to overall village and school development.
BMG: HOW?

**With Children**
1. Formation of Children’s Council
2. Participation in awareness rallies and campaigns
3. School enrollment and retention
4. Life skills training
5. Extra curricular development
6. Participation in village development

**With families**
1. Counselling to send wards to school
2. Awareness on government social welfare schemes
3. Attitudinal and mind-set change
**BMG: HOW?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>With Communities and leaders</th>
<th>With government and other agencies</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Contain social evils such as early and</td>
<td>1. Meetings and trainings</td>
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<td>forced marriages, trafficking, migration,</td>
<td>2. Sensitisation drives</td>
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<td>violence against children</td>
<td>3. Policy and programs</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Organise village meetings and ensure</td>
<td>4. Law enforcement agencies</td>
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<td>participation</td>
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<td>3. Awareness on basic human rights with a</td>
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<td>focus on sexual and reproductive health</td>
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<td>4. Raise concerns with local governments on</td>
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<td>development issues</td>
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<td>5. Information centres</td>
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<td>6. Alternate livelihood programs</td>
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<td>7. Organizing legal awareness and health and</td>
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<td>hygiene drives</td>
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A SOCIAL MOVEMENT towards Protection of Children

A UNIQUE SOCIAL INNOVATION to prevent children from all forms of exploitation, violence and abuse

CHANGE-AGENTS to facilitate the Empowerment Process by flourishing a relationship of Friendship with Children
Issues we Tackle >>>

- Child Labour, Child Marriage, Child Trafficking,
- Gender and Caste-based Discrimination
- Access to Quality Education, Health, Malnourishment, Clean Environment

Children in Exploitative Conditions

Children ensured protection

Enrollment in School

Formation of Children’s Council

Children become agents-of-change

Child Friendly Village
Chronology of Bal Mitra Gram

- **2001**: First BMG in Papdi Village, Rajasthan
- **2002**: Block of 150 BMGs formed in Nawada, Bihar
- **2005**: International Mica Industry Corporates initiated action on child labour in mica mining and collection
- **2009-10**: Over 500 BMGs scaled in Nepal
- **2012**: First International Mica Conference held in India
- **2016**: United States Department of labour and Global Development Network awarded BMGs as Best Practice Model
- **2017**: • Delhi Declaration and Conference resulting in Creation of Consortium of Responsible Mica Initiative (RMI)
  • 40 BMGs scaled in Uganda

540 BMGs formed All India (since 2001)
Formation of a *Bal Mitra Gram*

- **Identification of villages and prevailing issues**
  - 0-2 months
  - Formation of stakeholders’ groups
  - Rapport building with communities and local government

- **Formation of Bal Panchayats or Children’s Council**
  - 3-6 months
  - Recognition of Bal Panchayats by Gram Panchayat (Village Council)

- **Enrollments of school drop-outs and out-of-school children**
  - 7-12 months
  - Awareness generation on social evils (child marriages, alcoholism), health, hygiene, environment and community development

- **Ensuring quality education to all children**
  - 13-24 months

- **Access to drinking water and basic amenities of life**
  - 25-36 months

- **Women and youth empowerment (income generation and vocational skills)**

- **Declaring a village as *Bal Mitra Gram***

- **Follow-up BMG activities**
Geographical Coverage: BMGs (2001-2018)

324 BMGs currently operational in India

540 BMGs in India (2001 - till date)

216 BMGs Handed-Over to communities

Impact Outreach

11,44,000 : Population
6,55,000 : Children
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Direct Stakeholders</th>
<th>Intermediate target groups</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Children</strong></td>
<td>• Teachers</td>
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<tr>
<td>Age group 0-5 years,</td>
<td>• Employers of children</td>
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<td>6-14 years, 14-18 years</td>
<td>• Local Business /Traders</td>
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<td>• Local Administration</td>
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<td>• Local Leaders</td>
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<td>• Local Government Institutions</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Youth</strong></td>
<td>• Local Media</td>
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<td>Young men and young</td>
<td>• Local Civil Society Organizations</td>
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<td>women age group 18-25</td>
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<tr>
<td>years</td>
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<td><strong>Women</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>All women</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Marginalized and vulnerable groups</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Minorities</td>
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<td><strong>Communities</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<td>• Marginalized and</td>
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Activities in a *Bal Mitra Gram*

1. Withdrawing Children from Work and Enrolling in School
Over 10,500 children withdrawn from situations of Child Labour and Out-of-school

>50,000 Children retained in schools
Ensuring access to quality and inclusive education
14 new schools built in BMGs + 40 school building renovated

30 schools renovated

more than 70 schools were upgraded from Primary to Secondary

>100 Regular teacher appointments

Classroom supplies were provided in 240 schools (ex. blackboard, benches, rug, sports material etc.)

Impact >>>
Ankita, aged 15 years from BMG Bhilay, Ganj Basoda (MP), is today a graduate from higher secondary school who wants to pursue education and become a teacher. Owing to her parents’ decision of not sending her to school, she was a drop-out. But she wanted to study. She got in touch with the local Community Social Worker and got herself enrolled in a school in her village. This was symbolic of the empowerment process the girls in her village have gone through as they were now not only voicing their opinions but vehemently shattering the set structures of the society.
Retention rate in government-run and monitored schools is only 64% (2015, DISE Report)

Retention rate of enrolled children in BMGs across India is 95%

Retention rate of enrolled children (Jharkhand and Bihar)

- 75% (2005-2010)
- 95% (2010-2016)
Access to Education for Girls

Over

675

Bicycles distributed all over India

In 2015 a public event held by BBA resulted in the govt. to order distribution of bicycles to all children going to school in Koderma.
“The Primary School of BMG Mangala Panchayat was only till 5th standard. Beyond 5th, children had to travel for more than 12 kms to attend school.

The Bal Panchayat decided to raise this concern at the Gram Panchayat meeting. They also gathered support from community members, teachers and stakeholder groups. Gram Panchayat decided to take up the issue in one of the public hearings held by Karnataka State Commission of Protection of Child Rights (KSCPCR) in Bangalore.

With the special permission from the Chairperson the matter was taken into consideration immediately and within a period of 2 months a new building for the Higher Primary School was set up in Mangala BMG.”

“Jyoti, a 13 years old girl, from BMG Kalina of Meerut, could never be enrolled in a school. Victim of gender-based discrimination, she was denied education and was domesticated at home for household chores. But it is because of her determination and her fellow classmate- Bharti’s will, who was also a Bal Panchayat member, that Jyoti was made regular in school.”
Promoting democratic child participation
Bal Panchayats (Children’s Council/Parliament) formed

2,970 Girl child members out of 5,940 members

6,480 Applications written and raised by Children’s Council/Parliament

Impact >>>
4 Empowering girls and women
Impact >>>

- 18 Self Help Groups trained
- 55 Post natal care facilities in villages improved
- > 230 Complaints raised to health and civic authorities
- > 140 Meetings held on adolescent sexual health awareness
Payal, 13 years old, lives in Hinsla, Rajasthan, a Bal Mitra Gram (2012) where all the children are free from exploitation and are enrolled in elementary school. Growing up, Payal witnessed child labour and other exploitations against children around her. Through her participation in the Bal Panchayat as Bal Pradhan of the village, she has not just been actively involved in helping the children but also women twice her age. Needless to say, there has been a positive change in the gender roles within many households of the village wherein women have now started voicing their opinions much more firmly. “Until and unless children themselves realise that they have some rights, they won’t feel unyoked. A child must have some agency which enables her/him to decide.” added Payal. She also carried out rallies and protests to engage various women’s groups and youth forums of her village on ill-practices, namely *Ghunghat Pratha*, child marriage and other rituals that perpetuate patriarchy.

In 2013, Payal was invited by the Swedish council to judge the World’s children’s prize and to meet the Queen. Payal has become an inspiration for the people, especially youth and girls of her village and the world.
5 Promoting youth participation
Impact >>>

Vocational Skills building Trainings

Youth participated in state level sports competitions

Complaints raised to education and civic authorities
Emerging Changemaker

Thirteen year old Lalita Duhariya from a village in Alwar district of Rajasthan is classic example how determined children lead from the front in a battle against gender and caste prejudices that have bedeviled India for centuries. Lalita leads from the front to demolish these prejudices and work towards a fairer and more egalitarian society. Since her childhood, Lalita had protested against both caste and gender discrimination practiced in her village and nearby areas. She became a member of the Bal Panchayat and started fighting against caste discrimination in her school. She persuaded children attending the school to share their meals without bothering about caste. Normally, upper caste children would not share meals with children from the lower caste. Nor would they eat meals cooked by people belong to lower castes.

Actively helped and encouraged by her school principal and some teachers, Lalita led a campaign against this kind of caste prejudice and her efforts soon bore fruit. She persuaded her fellow school children to share meals cooked by a lower caste lady. Earlier, parents of upper caste children had ordered them not eat those meals. But all children soon started eating together. A major victory for her came during the festival Makar Sankranti. She led a team of Bal Panchayat members and encouraged all villagers to share the festivities and the meals together. These efforts have gone a long way in reducing caste prejudice in her village. Children and villagers have now understood that caste factor should not discriminate between human values. Makar sankranti’s involves celebration of inter-caste celebration; they speak to each other in a group and share their issues or future development practices. They now say “it’s our village” from” it’s our caste”.
Supporting Village Development-led Activities for a Child Friendly Environment

Access to Drinking Water facilities

> 140 Ponds, Culverts and Check dams construction facilitated

> 180 Hand Pumps installed and repaired
Facilitate construction of >95 km of metallic road

90% of BMGs were made access to Electricity line and Communication towers
Ensuring functioning of neo-natal and post-natal services at Anganwadi Centers

45 Health Camps facilitated with Government support
Environment and Climate Change

Environment awareness and water conservation rallies

Innovative environment protection and water conservation projects
“It is only because of reputable organisation like BBA that we are introducing this bill.”
Minister for Labour and Employment Mr. Dattatreya while introducing child labour bill banning all forms of child labour, in the Indian Parliament

Minister of Mining, Mr. Narendra Singh Tomar contributed his first month salary to BBA and celebrated his birthday with former child labourers

8 Engagements and Advocacy Initiatives with Governments
9 Promoting Accountability

Checking ground realities on securing child rights

Vigilance meetings with community members
1. **Education and Vocational Training**: State Scholarship programs for ultra-poor to attend school.

2. **Food**: Mid-day Meal - quality and regularity improved

3. **Employment**: Facilitated access to MGNREGA and Bharat Sakhshar Yojna For Women

4. **Housing**: Indira Awaas Yojana (IAY) to provide housing for the rural poor in India

5. **Information**: Right to Information Act (RTI) training

6. **Social Security**: Social Security for widows, Below Poverty Line Cards, Widow Pension - State funded, Old Age Pension - State funded

7. **Health**: Cashless insurance for hospitalisation in public as well as private hospitals.

8. **Electricity**: Solar Light - State funded

9. **Loans for Farmers**: Credit card to provide affordable credit for farmers in India.

10. **Women Empowerment**: Government supported Ujjawala Yojana facilitated distribution of over 60 cooking gas stoves
11 Capacity Building and Training Programmes

35 Legal Camps to build awareness on basic human and legal rights

Stakeholder Groups Capacity Building Workshops
Challenges in the field

Naxalites/Anti-Government Groups
Challenges in the field

Difficult Terrain and Harsh Weather
Challenges in the field

Few Roads

Little Communication
Challenges in the field

Conflicts within and with Communities
Challenges in the field

Absence of CSOs

Low Capacity NGOs
Challenges in the field

Untraced, Opaque and Unorganised Supply Chain
Return On Investment

Partnership for a Social Cause

Wider Coverage and contribution for Education of Children and No to Child Labour

Mileage in-terms of Visibility and branding of child labour free products/Services