

Position Paper of CMCJ – TN

Vision 2023

“Climate change is one of the greatest challenges facing humanity at the start of 21st century for food security, especially safe future for children and future generation. Any failure to meet the challenge raises the spectrum of unprecedented reversals in human development.” – (HDR 2007/2008)

Children Movement for Climate Justice (CMCJ) in Tamilnadu is a children led movement which was started by children in Virudunagar, facilitated and promoted by a Rights Based NGO called RCPDS during 2008. The children who have joined during the initial years have now grown up as youth by their age and gradually spread their movement to their peers across 12 districts of Tamilnadu.

Having grown to a size of 4000 plus members evolved a formal structure called “ District Core Teams” to facilitate appropriate nurturing and update of current situation and cross learning. As part of their process the young leaders from member districts meet periodically once a quarter with an annual reflection session. As such during the year 2017 the Tamilnadu State level committee evolved a position paper as a tool and guiding tool using participatory methods for future scaling up. This position paper will be presented to Kindernothilfe, Germany and other Rights based, child focussed climate justice organisations across to strengthen the network.

The earth we all live in is experiencing constant changes in the atmosphere, bio diversity and whole environment. This directly has adverse impact on the present children and the next generations who will face the consequences of the mismanagement and choices made by others.

Climate change threatens our lives, our families and our future. We, the children and youth from remotely positioned marginalised families, will not sit back and watch. We already experience the effects of climate change. Our families and communities are deprived of clean drinking water, denied access to agricultural options and vulnerable to disease every time it floods. Our plates are getting empty gradually due to drought. Our families depend greatly on the political will of the Government through PDS (public distribution system) to fill our hungry stomachs. Our future is at risk, and we demand that something be done. The children and youth are ready to take action, and we request the same from our government too. The time for talk is over. Now, we hold you accountable for your commitments.

As it could be seen from the State Action Plan for climate change (though there is no scope for child participation and the same is not designed from child perspective) for 2023 as well National Action Plan, the challenges may appear insurmountable, yet as stakeholders, our generation is ready to collaborate in this cause.

- ✿ We commit to personal lifestyle changes that place the common good above our individual desires and current way of life.



- ✿ We commit to educate and empower ourselves, our peers and our communities to adapt to and mitigate the changing climate.
- ✿ We commit to engage and actively cooperate with all generations and governments in combating climate change.

We as members of CMCJ Tamilnadu, children and youth, are positioned, concerned, clear on our stand from Child Rights perspective, active, informed, and even more important we are personally involved in the process of mitigation, adaptation and negotiations with Government of Tamilnadu and India through our National body lobby and advocacy activities. Over the past years we manage to raise our membership to 4000 plus spread across almost 16 districts of Tamilnadu which is almost 50% geographically.

In the past we have organised series of workshops to build the capacity of fellow members on basics of climate change, climate change and science behind it, carbon sinks and footprints, climate change and child rights, etc. Simultaneously efforts were made to increase the membership base through reaching school system jointly with Tamilnadu Government Education department to link with 'Pasumai Padai' (Green Brigade) This was further strengthened with children (youth leaders of CMCJ) participating as resource persons in a State level workshop organised by Tamilnadu Voluntary Health Association where in great interest was shown by many new district schools and NGOs.

A systematic participatory research study was done by children and youth on understanding the impact of climate change on various eco systems, such as forest, coastal and agro eco systems of inland districts with special focus to livelihoods and children. This was later presented to Government line departments to reflect on the main stream response system to the negative impacts of climate change and its policy implications.

Members of CMCJ also participated in panel discussions, sessions at the National level, public hearings and sessions to share best practices. Special roundtable discussions were held about mainstreaming biodiversity across the five relevant sectors: agriculture, coastal livelihoods, tribal based forest ecosystem, tourism, urbanisation and its impact on food security. We also consider that all the above biodiversity systems cuts across main life systems of marginalised, dalit, adivasi with special focus on child rights, gender and disability.

The idea of this position paper stems out of the recent exercise done by the Government of Tamilnadu preparing its mission paper State Action Plan on climate change 2023. Many interventions and thrust areas were considered in the State Action Plan but unfortunately the paper lack insight into children





right and the issue of climate change being one of the worst form which can place present and future children into great threat and vulnerability.

Hence this mission of CMCJ TN is to develop strategic knowledge required for informed decision making for addressing the climate change challenges from child rights perspective. It is a fact that climate change manifests itself locally, though the drivers of the change i.e., the greenhouse gases are generated globally through anthropogenic activities. In view of the fact that local vulnerabilities due to climate change can be addressed more adequately at local level itself. Hence the position paper aims to present a climate response framework at the State level to reduce vulnerability; reduce hazards and exposure, pool, transfer, and strategies for mitigation and respond effectively. It also look possible ways to increase capacity to cope with unforeseen events, while articulating flexible response strategies and actions keeping the present and future children in mind.

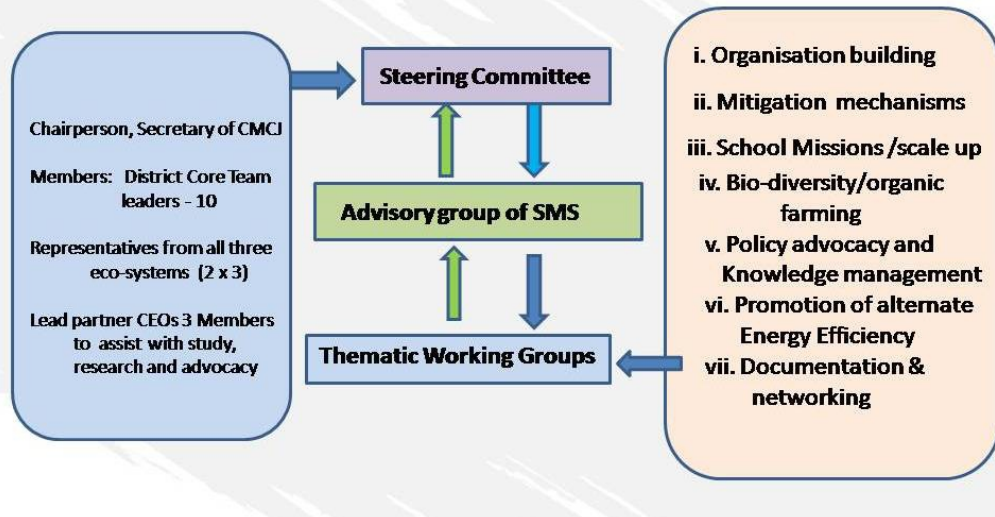
The focus areas planned for response in this position paper include ...

- . i. Organisation building
- ii. Mitigation mechanisms
- iii. School Missions /scale up
- iv. Bio-diversity/organic farming
- v. Policy advocacy and Knowledge management
- vi. Promotion of alternate Energy Efficiency
- vii. Documentation & networking

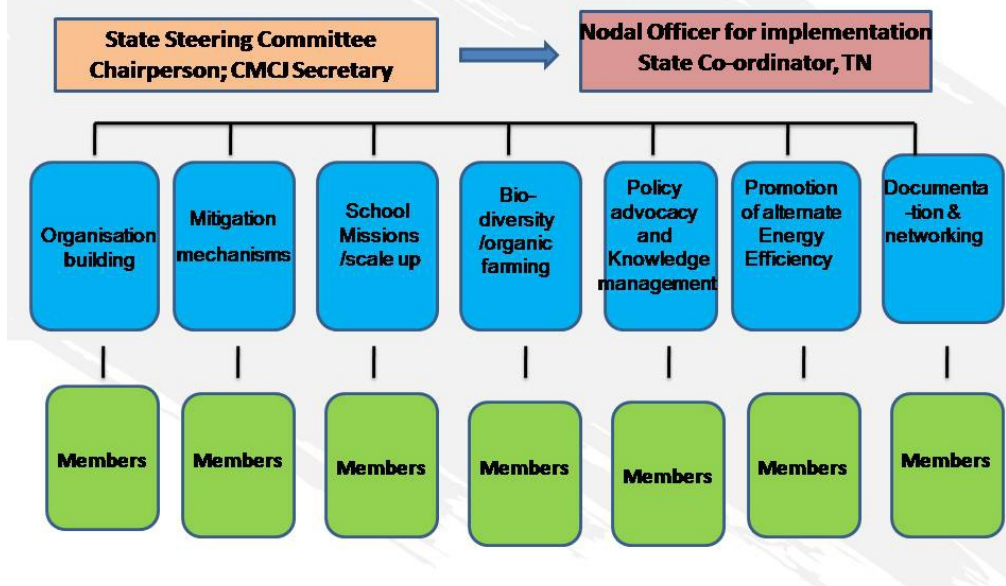
Implementation Arrangement and functional system for implementation of the position paper by CMCJ Tamil Nadu is evolved by the general body.

This document summarizes the challenges and opportunities, policy recommendations, and concrete actions that members of CMCJ and our youth commit to contribute towards mitigating climate change making the earth liveable not only for the present generation but also for the future generation. We children and youth play an integral role in contributing to mitigation, policy advocacy to ensure implementation of child friendly State and National targets as spelt out in the National policy.

Implementation Arrangement for the position paper of Tamil Nadu CMCI



FUNCTIONAL AND REPORTING MECHANISMS



Challenges and Opportunities

In order to ensure Child Rights, for which our country is a party to, and its implication in the light of changing climate scenario we need to address the issues related environmental degradation from Rights perspective especially through various measures of building appropriate awareness, identify various innovative mitigation measures and working closely with policy advocacy. The adverse effects



TENTATIVE TIMEPLAN FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF THE POSITION PAPER 2023

August 2017	District Core committee representatives discuss the first prelim draft of the position paper against the TNSAPCC
August till September 2017	Prelim draft discussed across members of the District chapter, implementation team, space for children involvement, etc., and come up with their input. Thus the second draft will be primarily child focussed and from child perspective using participatory rights of children.
30 September 2017	The second draft is placed across the subject matter specialists/advisors on the implementation committee against various thematic areas for their inputs and again circulated for discussion by district teams
December 2017	Get approval of the State and National guidance groups/steering committee as well the executive committee of CMCJ registered society as well prepare/finalyse impenentation time schedule as well interventions
May 2018	Children Movement for Climate Justice – Tamilnadu chapter position paper – 2023 is implemented in full swing as policy advocacy effort.

must be addressed on the global level, but for us initially with the State and Centre Governments. For this we need to build allies across the other State chapters and other networks that exist with similar focus.

While considering Ecological Rights and climate justice as integral part of the existing Child Rights frame work under the UNCRC, it is very evident that if protected water, clean air for breathing deplete due to the climate change, this poses a great threat to the other basic rights such as survival, protection and development. Hence we propose to take the challenge of making participatory rights of children as means to realising ecological rights by directly involving ourselves as broad base front line players.

There are many current practices and institutions that can be the source of positive change towards achieving the goals set in the National Action Plan, and we strongly believe that we, children and youth can play an integral role in galvanizing and promoting these possibilities from child rights perspective – i.e. our Ecological Rights and Climate Justice for the present and future children.

The challenges that we face are not due to a lack of technological tools or action plans, but a lack of proper implementation or of access to tools and initiatives. It is crucial to differentiate when the matter is about insufficient space for knowledge transfer for children and youth, the “Will” within the State



policies and addressing the cross cultural issue for children to come together, especially girl children and mainly building awareness among community based institutions to adopt to a positive change process.

Recommendations

In order to overcome the challenges stated above, and to take advantage of the related opportunities, we consider the following recommendations to be adopted by our Movement:

- ❖ Create awareness on ecological rights of children and pressurise our local panchayats and administrative system to be positive and create adequate space for children keeping their ecological rights in perspective
- ❖ Sensitise towards promoting eco friendly services within our villages and municipalities which will come out of planned use of natural resources and well planned habitats with clean drinking water, many green spaces and efficient transport networks.
- ❖ Initiate advocacy through elected representatives and platforms to prevent or control more of the agricultural lands becoming residential areas and industrial sector encroachment
- ❖ Initiate advocacy to influence the school system to include disaster preparedness and official regulations, safety standards and standard emergency protocol at easy reach of children
- ❖ Initiate and advocacy and campaigns, as recurrent monsoon failure cause drought and desertification in most part of the south while heavy flooding constantly happening in the North basic soil and water conservation measure, linking of rivers and strengthening water bodies for effective water harvest should be considered as top priority by our State and Central governments.
- ❖ Building awareness using various government sponsored platforms across peers on water depletion, increasing pollution, depleting natural resources, reducing productive lands and fast approaching food insecurity and help them to see the relevance for considering these as priority areas for adjustment and adaptation.
- ❖ Set up district/State level pilot model plots related to strengthening bio-diversity that promote the conservation of endangered crops, native species supported by periodical exposure and cross learning events, in particular for children from marginalised sections.

- ❖ We recommend that children and youth be involved in the current efforts towards eliminating harmful agricultural practices, subsidies, and increasing access to beneficial subsidies to small land holdings of the marginalised with organic entrepreneurs.
- ❖ We call upon governments to take urgent action to integrate Climate change education as mandatory and substantial area of the school curriculum. Governments should also support organizations which already educate youth on climate issues. with assured participation of children, youth and civil society organizations, in order to foster a well informed younger generation and user participation.

Our Commitments

- ❖ We commit to personal lifestyle changes that place the common good above our individual desires and current way of life.
- ❖ We commit to educate and empower ourselves, our peers and our communities to adapt to and mitigate the changing climate.
- ❖ We commit to engage and actively cooperate with all generations and governments in combating climate change.
- ❖ We are committed to maintain and promote the good practices implemented by previous generations and learn from identified mistakes. We assure to make personally change our life styles and take advantage of the social, financial, and technological tools and platforms available in order to mainstream Biodiversity for wellbeing irrespective of the professional field we are in the future.
- ❖ We are committed to identifying, embracing, and transmitting the traditional knowledge from past to future generations. We assure to do participatory research and learn about practices that reinforce the sustainable development from the indigenous knowledge.
- ❖ In recognizing our unique capacity to create awareness among our peers, as well as targeting other population groups, we are committed to assuming an active role in communicating the importance of Biodiversity. This is an intergenerational opportunity to enable equitable involvement in the sectors mentioned above.
- ❖ We are committed to working with multilevel stakeholders through our National network and other networks with similar objectives in order to protect and sustain a earth as a place livable not only for this generation but also to the future children buy working together.





Conclusion

It is evident from the recent International study done by Asia Development Bank, which says that if we allow this trend of climate change around 13 crore persons may be killed in South Asia which specially mention South India (Chennai and other ports in Tamilnadu) before 2050. We are sure everyone will agree that this information is frightening and it is the present and future children who are going to be the victims. This makes our involvement, effort and movement very crucial and core to address the issue.

The process of CMCJ making strategic plans along with other stakeholders it is inevitable that we get directly involved in the addressing process. There is a wealth of passion and knowledge that needs to be tapped into, and this can only be properly channelled if the correct opportunities are presented to us.

We only have few years left to successfully reach the state and National targets, but the question still remains will this really address the issue without the participation of children and the youth who are the front line player. As such we children, the members of CMCJ prepared this position paper to make our stand clear and to work jointly with other stake holders and to bring out the desirable outcomes. The battle against climate change is upon all of us. We are ready to act and we invite you to join us. Climate change is affecting our lives, our families and our future. We must act immediately and we are ready to fulfill our commitments. We are prepared to give all we have as long as there is the possibility of saving our planet.

We expect the same courage from you all.

Acknowledgement

- ❖ CMCJ National Office
- ❖ Our partner organisations
- ❖ KNH, India and Germany
- ❖ TNVHA
- ❖ Tamilnadu Government Departments
 - ◆ Education, Agriculture, Forestry and fisheries
- ❖ Board members of RCPDS/SPEECH
- ❖ NCDHR, New Delhi