

A study on the Challenges and Best Practices of Child Rights Clubs in Shillong

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ABSTRACT

Child Rights Clubs (ChRCs) function as participatory platforms aimed at enhancing awareness, leadership, and advocacy among children. In Shillong, ChRCs operate under the Child Friendly Shillong initiative to create child-friendly spaces and strengthen child participation. Despite their growing presence, limited empirical research has examined the challenges faced by members and the best practices adopted by ChRCs within the local context. This study aimed to identify the key challenges faced by members of ChRCs in Shillong and assess the best practices adopted by these clubs. A descriptive research design with a quantitative approach was employed in this study. Fifty members below the age of 18 years from three ChRCs in Shillong were purposively selected as respondents. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire consisting of closed-ended questions and were analysed using descriptive statistical techniques, including frequency and percentage analyses, with the aid of Microsoft Excel. The findings revealed that awareness campaigns were the most common activity conducted by the clubs (38%), followed by a combination of street plays, awareness drives, and leadership training (22%). Programmes on drug and substance abuse awareness were identified as the most successful initiative (40%). The study also identified several challenges affecting the functioning of the clubs, including delays in approvals and decision-making (22%), limited understanding of ChRCs among local authorities (18%), lack of resources and logistical support (14%), communication barriers, and inadequate guidance from facilitators. Overall, the study found that ChRCs in Shillong serve as important platforms for promoting child rights awareness and encouraging child participation. However, institutional coordination gaps, communication barriers, and limited mentoring support constrain their effective functioning. Strengthening stakeholder coordination, improving support systems, and expanding community outreach may enhance the sustainability and overall effectiveness of these clubs.

KEYWORDS: Child Rights Club, Child Participation, Empowerment, Challenges, Best Practices, Shillong

INTRODUCTION

Children are often described as the future of society, but they are equally important in the present as individuals who possess rights, dignity, and a voice of their own. Despite this recognition, many children across the world continue to face conditions that affect their safety, access to education, and overall well-being. According to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), a child is defined as any individual below the age of 18 and they are entitled to rights as well as special protection and care, regardless of gender, nationality, or social background (United

Nations [UN], 1989). On the 11th of December 1992, India signed the United Declaration on the CRC, which is one of the most critical steps in ensuring the protection and interest of a child (National Human Rights Commission [NHRC], 2019). Since its adoption, the Convention has significantly influenced India in formulating child-centred policies and strengthening constitutional and legal frameworks to safeguard and promote the rights of children. Key legislations such as the Right to Education Act (2009), the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act (2015), and the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act

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(2012) aim to protect children from exploitation and to foster a safe, inclusive and supportive space where they can grow and develop with dignity (Bal Raksha Bharat, 2024).

However, experts on child rights are of the opinion that the scheme, law and policy to safeguard the rights of children are yet to be implemented effectively till date (NHRC, 2019). This gap in implementation is reflected in the number of reported child rights violations. According to the National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR), reported cases of child rights violations increased from 2,404 in 2012–13 to 3,281 in 2013–14 and further to 3,340 in 2014–15. During 2015–16, a total of 2,270 cases had already been registered up to 30 June 2015 (Press Information Bureau, 2015). Thus, violence against children continues to be a widespread problem, affecting millions of children across all socio-economic sections of Indian society (UNICEF India, n.d.-a). In 2021, the Bosco Integrated Development Society (BIDS) launched the Child Friendly Shillong (CFS) initiative in Shillong, Meghalaya to implement protective strategies for vulnerable children and to improve community-oriented child protection frameworks through the promotion of child rights and available services (The Shillong Times, 2025).

As part of its efforts to promote and protect child rights, CFS has established 104 Child Rights Clubs (CRCs), benefiting more than 3,164 children, of whom over 2,300 are actively involved in the programme (BIDS, 2025). CRCs are child-friendly platforms that bring children together to learn about their rights and responsibility-ties, discuss issues that affect them and encourage active participation as agents of social change within their communities (The Shillong Times, 2025; Juma & Muoki, 2023). This initiative is in-tended to promote and protect children's rights by enhancing their access to the fundamental rights of survival, protection, development, and participation while providing them with a platform to voice their opinions, concerns, and advocate for children whose voices

are often unheard (Child Friendly Shillong et al., 2023; HP News Service, 2024). At the same time, existing literature highlights several challenges in ensuring meaningful child participation, emphasizing that children should be recognized as active citizens rather than passive recipients of adult decisions. In practice, however, participation is often constrained by adult as assumptions about children's age and maturity, resulting in power imbalances, tokenistic involvement, limited inclusion of marginalized and children with disabilities, and inadequate awareness of children's rights and opportunities for meaningful engagement (Muharman et al., 2026). These challenges are further compounded by limited public awareness of child rights, as a study conducted among 247 adults in Shillong found that 67% of the respondents were unaware of child rights (Child Friendly Shillong et al., 2023).

These findings suggest that when adults lack awareness of child rights, children are less likely to exercise and realize their rights effectively, as adults play a crucial role in creating supportive environments for meaningful participation and protection. Despite increasing attention to child participation at both national and international levels, there is still limited empirical research focusing on how CRCs operate in specific local contexts such as Shillong. Much of the existing literature provides a general overview of child participation but does not fully explore the practical challenges and best practices that emerge at the grassroots level.

This gap indicates the need for more context-specific studies to better understand how these clubs' function, the constraints they face, and the ways in which their effectiveness can be improved. Understanding both the strengths and the limitations of these clubs is therefore important. While they have significant potential to empower children and promote child-friendly environments, their long-term success depends on sustained support, active involvement, and collaboration among schools, families, NGOs, and the wider

community. In this context, the present study examines the challenges and best practices of CRCs in Shillong. By examining the functioning of CRCs, children's levels of participation, the challenges encountered, and the support systems that influence these clubs, the study seeks to generate context-specific evidence to strengthen child rights initiatives and contribute to a more inclusive, participatory, and protective environment for children in Meghalaya.

Objectives of the study

- i. To identify the key challenges faced by members of CRCs in Shillong.
- ii. To assess the best practices of CRCs in Shillong.

METHODOLOGY

The study followed a descriptive research design with a quantitative approach to examine the current challenges faced by members of CRCs and to assess the best practices adopted by these clubs in Shillong. A descriptive research design was considered appropriate because it facilitates the systematic description of the existing conditions and experiences of CRCs members. A multistage purposive sampling technique was employed in this study. In the first stage, CFS purposely selected CRCs based on their geographical location and active functioning. Due to time and resource constraints, only three clubs were included in the study, out of which, two were school-based and one was community-based.

The total population of the study consisted of 80 members across the three selected CRCs. In the second stage, 50 respondents below the age of 18 years were purposively selected based on their active participation and their willingness to participate in the study, with the assistance of the Child Rights Facilitators (CRF) of the selected clubs. Both boys and girls were included in the sample. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire consisting of closed-ended questions. The questionnaire focused on identifying the challenges experienced by club members and assessing the best practices adopted by the clubs.

The questionnaire was reviewed by content experts and language experts to ensure content validity, clarity, and appropriateness of language.

The collected data were analysed using descriptive statistics, including frequency distributions, percentages, and tabular presentations, to summarize and interpret the findings.

Ethical Considerations

Prior permission to conduct the study was obtained from the BIDS, under which the CFS project and the selected CRCs operate. Before data collection, the purpose and objectives of the study were clearly explained to all respondents. Informed assent was obtained from the child participants, and permission was sought from the respective schools and CRFs prior to data collection.

Respondents were informed of their right to refuse to answer any question and to withdraw from the study at any stage without any consequences. To ensure the quality and validity of the research instrument, the questionnaire was reviewed by content experts and language experts before its administration.

Throughout the study, confidentiality and anonymity of the respondents were strictly maintained. Personal information was not disclosed, and all data collected were used solely for academic and research purposes.

RESULTS

The findings of the study provide insights into the challenges faced by members of CRCs in Shillong and the best practices adopted by these clubs. The results are presented under three sections:

- A. Respondents' Profile, Motivation for Joining, and Awareness of Child Rights**
- B. Challenges Faced by Respondents as Members of the CRCs**
- C. Respondents' Perceptions of the Best Practices of CRCs**

These findings contribute to a better understanding of the experiences of CRCs members and the practices that support the promotion and protection of child rights.

A. Respondents' Profile, Motivation for Joining, and Awareness of Child Rights

Table 1: Reasons Respondents Joined the CRCs

Responses	n	%
Interest in Child Rights	31	62
For school/community involvement	11	22
Influence from peers/teachers	8	16
Total	50	100

The table shows that many respondents (62%) joined the CRCs due to their interest in child rights. This suggests that most members were motivated by a desire to learn about and promote the rights and well-being of children. In addition, 22% of the respondents joined the club to participate in school or community activities, while 16% were influenced by their peers or teachers. These findings indicate that personal interest, opportunities for community involvement, and encouragement from significant others played important roles in motivating respondents to become members of the CRCs.

Table 2: Respondents' Awareness of Child Rights

Responses	N	%
Yes	33	66
No	4	8
Not sure	13	26
Total	50	100

The table shows that many of the respondents (66%) reported being aware of child rights. This indicates that most members of the CRCs possess basic awareness of the rights and entitlements of children. However, 26% of the respondents stated that they were not sure about their awareness of child rights, while 8% reported that they were not aware of child rights. These findings suggest that although awareness of child rights is generally high among respondents, there remains a need for continued awareness and educational activities to strengthen understanding among all club members.

Table 3: Respondents' level of understanding of child rights

Responses	n	%
Right to go to school, safe and protected, play and rest, speak and be heard, good food, water and	35	70

healthcare, live with family and loved ones.		
The right to go to school	4	8
The right to be safe and protected	4	8
The right to speak and be heard	2	4
The right to live with a family that loves and cares for you	2	4
The right to play and rest	1	2
I am not sure/ I do not know	2	4
Total	50	100

The table shows that many of the respondents (70%) demonstrated a comprehensive understanding of child rights by identifying several key rights, including the right to education, protection, participation, health, family care, and recreation. This suggests that most CRCs members possess a broad understanding of the various rights entitled to children. A smaller number of respondents mentioned specific rights, such as the right to go to school (8%), the right to be safe and protected (8%), the right to speak and be heard (4%), the right to live with a caring family (4%), and the right to play and rest (2%). Only 4% of the respondents stated that they were not sure or did not know about child rights. Overall, the findings indicate a generally high level of understanding of child rights among respondents, although some members demonstrated knowledge of only particular aspects of these rights.

Table 4: Different Types of Child Rights Identified by Respondents

Responses	n	%
Right to development, protection, participation & Survival	37	74
Right to protection	5	10
Right to development	4	8
Right to survival	3	6
Right to participation	1	2
Total	50	100

The table indicates that a large majority of respondents (74%) were able to identify all four major categories of child rights, namely the right to survival, development, protection, and participation. This suggests a high level of awareness and understanding of the fundamental

rights of children among most CRCs members. A smaller number of respondents identified individual categories, including the right to protection (10%), the right to development (8%), the right to survival (6%), and the right to participation (2%). The findings indicate that most respondents were able to identify multiple categories of child rights, while some mentioned only specific categories.

A. Challenges Faced by Respondents as Members of the CRCs

Table 5: Challenges Encountered by Respondents While Working with the Local Government/Dorbar Shnong

Responses	n	%
Delay in approvals or decision-making	11	22
Limited understanding of CRCs	9	18
Lack of resources or logistical support	7	14
Communication barriers (language, formality, etc.)	3	6
Lack of interest or cooperation from local leaders	1	2
Not aware	19	38
Total	50	100

The table shows that 38% of the respondents were not aware of any challenges encountered while working with the Local Government or Dorbar Shnong. Among those who reported challenges, the most common was delay in approvals or decision-making (22%), followed by limited understanding of CRCs among local authorities (18%). Additionally, 14% of the respondents identified a lack of resources or logistical support as a challenge, while smaller proportions reported communication barriers (6%) and lack of interest or cooperation from local leaders (2%). These findings suggest that administrative delays, limited awareness of CRCs activities, and inadequate support from local institutions were the main challenges experienced by respondents in their engagement with the Local Government and Dorbar Shnong.

Table 6: Challenges Encountered by Respondents while working with other CRCs members

Responses	n	%
Lack of communication	10	20

Lack of cooperation or teamwork, Irregular attendance by members, Unequal participation in activities and Lack of communication	8	16
Lack of cooperation or teamwork, Differences in opinion or conflict and Lack of communication	6	12
Lack of cooperation or teamwork	5	10
Differences in opinion or conflict	5	10
Irregular attendance by members	5	10
Unequal participation in activities	2	4
Other	3	6
No challenges encountered	6	12
Total	50	100

The table shows that lack of communication was the most frequently reported challenge, identified by 20% of the respondents. Lack of cooperation or teamwork, differences in opinion or conflict, and irregular attendance by members were each reported by 10% of the respondents. Smaller proportions reported unequal participation in activities (4%) and other challenges (6%), while 12% stated that they had not encountered any challenges. Overall, the findings suggest that communication difficulties, limited teamwork, and inconsistent member participation were the primary challenges experienced by respondents when working with other CRCs members.

Table 7: Challenges Encountered by Respondents While Working with the CRFs

Responses	n	%
Lack of motivation or encouragement	11	22
Language or communication gap	9	18
Lack of regular follow-up or guidance	8	16
Infrequent meetings or communication	3	6
Infrequent meetings/ communication, language/ communication gap and lack of motivation or encouragement	1	2
Other	11	22
No challenges encountered	7	14
Total	50	100

The table shows the challenges respondents faced while working with the CRF. The findings reveal that 22% of the respondents reported a lack of motivation or encouragement, while another 22% of the respondents mentioned other challenges. A

language or communication gap was reported by 18% of the respondents and 16% of them stated that there was a lack of regular follow-up or guidance. Infrequent meetings or communication were reported by 6% of the respondents, while 2% of the respondents experienced a combination of infrequent meetings, language or communication gaps, and lack of motivation or encouragement. Additionally, 14% of the respondents stated that they did not face any challenges while working with the CRF. Overall, the findings suggest that communication barriers, inadequate guidance, and lack of motivation were the primary challenges encountered by respondents in their interaction with the CRF.

B. Respondents' Perceptions of the Best Practices of CRCs

Table 8: Types of Activities Conducted by the CRCs

Responses	n	%
Awareness Campaigns	19	38
Street plays, Awareness Campaigns and Leadership training	11	22
Peer discussions	7	14
Workshops, Awareness Campaigns and Peer discussions	6	12
Street Plays	5	10
Leadership training	1	2
Workshops	1	2
Total	50	100

The table shows the different activities conducted by the CRCs. The findings reveal that awareness campaigns were the most reported activity, mentioned by 38% of the respondents. A combination of street plays, awareness campaigns, and leadership training was reported by 22% of the respondents. Peer discussions were mentioned by 14% of the respondents, while street plays were reported by 10% of them. In addition, 12% of the respondents reported a combination of workshops, awareness campaigns, and peer discussions. Workshops alone and leadership training alone were each reported by 2% of them. Overall, the findings suggest that awareness campaigns are the primary activity of CRCs, often complemented by

interactive activities such as street plays, peer discussions, workshops, and leadership training to promote child rights awareness and participation among children.

Table 9: Initiated by Respondents through the CRCs

Responses	n	%
Awareness programmes related to children	11	22
Performed skits and dramas about good and bad touch and substance abuse.	9	18
Creative workshop activities	8	16
Sports, Dance, Awareness programmes & Cleaning drive	7	14
Acted in a drama about peer pressure and motivation	2	4
Tree plantation and cleaning drive	2	4
Focused on child rights understanding and safety	1	2
Made paintings and posters related to child rights	1	2
No initiative undertaken yet	9	18
Total	50	100

The table shows that awareness programmes related to children were the most initiated activities, reported by 22% of the respondents. This was followed by skits and dramas on good touch, bad touch, and substance abuse (18%), creative workshop activities (16%), and sports, dance, awareness programmes, and cleaning drives (14%). These findings indicate that respondents actively participated in awareness-raising, educational, and creative activities through the CRCs. A smaller proportion of respondents reported initiating activities such as dramas on peer pressure and motivation (4%), tree plantation and cleaning drives (4%), child rights and safety awareness activities (2%), and making paintings and posters related to child rights (2%). However, 18% of the respondents stated that no initiative had been undertaken by them through the club. Overall, the findings show that respondents participated in a variety of activities related to child rights, awareness creation, creativity, and community engagement, with awareness and advocacy-related

activities emerging as the primary initiatives undertaken through the CRCs.

Table 10: Respondents' Perceptions of the Most Successful Initiatives of the CRCs

Responses	n	%
Awareness program on Drugs and Substance abuse in schools and the community	20	40
Chart making on all types of Child Rights	9	18
Substance abuse and personal safety	6	12
Drama performance on good touch and bad touch	3	6
Group discussion on child safety	2	4
I do not know	10	20
Total	50	100

The table indicates that 40% of the respondents considered awareness programmes on drug and substance abuse conducted in schools and communities to be the most successful initiative of the CRCs. This was followed by chart-making activities on different types of child rights (18%) and programmes on substance abuse and personal safety (12%), highlighting the importance of awareness and educational activities within the clubs. A smaller proportion of respondents identified drama performances on good touch and bad touch (6%) and group discussions on child safety (4%) as the most successful initiatives. However, 20% of the respondents reported that they did not know of any successful project or initiative. Overall, the findings suggest that awareness-based programmes, particularly those addressing drug and substance abuse, are perceived as the most effective and successful activities undertaken by the CRCs.

Table 11: Activities Considered Most Impactful by Respondents

Responses	n	%
Awareness programmes on drug and substance abuse	12	24
Skits about good and bad touch	10	20
Writing their understanding of Child rights	8	16
Awareness activities for community involvement	7	14

Campaigns about drug and substance abuse	3	6
Sessions focused on helping students leave bad habits	2	4
I do not know	8	16
Total	50	100

The table shows that awareness programmes on drug and substance abuse were considered the most impactful activity by 24% of the respondents, followed by skits on good touch and bad touch (20%). This indicates that activities addressing child protection and substance abuse are perceived as highly beneficial by club members. Additionally, 16% of the respondents identified writing their understanding of child rights as the most impactful activity, while another 16% reported that they did not know which activity was most impactful. Awareness activities promoting community involvement (14%), campaigns on drug and substance abuse (6%), and sessions aimed at helping students leave bad habits (4%) were mentioned by smaller proportions of respondents. These findings suggest that awareness-based and educational activities are viewed as the most effective practices of CRCs.

Table 12: Respondents' Perceptions of who mostly supports the CRCs

Responses	n	%
Teachers/School	28	56
Parents or Guardians	8	16
Caring Community Group (CCG)	2	4
Child Rights Facilitators	2	4
NGO partners/ Local Community leaders	10	20
Total	50	100

The table shows that more than half of the respondents (56%) identified teachers and schools as the primary source of support for the CRCs. This indicates the significant role that schools and teachers play in facilitating club activities and encouraging member participation. Parents or guardians were reported by 16% of the respondents, while 20% of them identified NGO partners or local community leaders as the main supporters. In addition, 4% of the respondents each reported the

CCG and CRF as the primary source of support. These findings suggest that schools, along with community stakeholders, are perceived as the major contributors to the functioning and sustainability of CRCs.

Table 13: Messages Respondents Would Share About Being a Member of a CRCs

Responses	n	%
I would encourage others to join and be part of it.	19	38
I want to share the knowledge I gained, like good/bad touch	18	36
Younger students need to learn from it	3	6
CRCs helps children live rightfully and safely	2	4
It increases awareness about children's rights and safety	7	14
All the above	1	2
Total	50	100

The table shows the messages respondents share about being involved in the CRCs. The findings reveal that 38% of the respondents would encourage others to join and be part of the club. Another 36% of the respondents stated that they would like to share the knowledge they gained, such as information about good and bad touch. 6% said that younger students need to learn from the club, while 4% of the respondents reported that the CRCs helps children live safely and understand their rights. In addition, 14% of the respondents stated that the club increases awareness of children's rights and safety and 2% of them mentioned all the above messages. These findings demonstrate that respondents perceive CRCs as effective platforms for learning, awareness creation, and child empowerment.

Table 14: Respondents' Suggestions for Improving the CRCs

Responses	n	%
Organize awareness programs in the community	18	36
Conduct regular meetings and improve communication	12	24
Spread the CRCs club to other areas and schools	3	6
Invite more people to join the CRCs club	10	20
More games and activities	7	14

Total	50	100
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The table shows the respondents' suggestions for making the CRCs more effective. The findings reveal that 36% suggested organizing awareness programmes in the community, while 24% recommended conducting regular meetings and improving communication. 20% suggested inviting more people to join the club, 14% recommended including more games and activities, and 6% suggested expanding the CRCs to other areas and schools. These findings indicate that respondents believe greater community engagement, active participation, effective communication, and wider outreach are important for strengthening the functioning and impact of CRCs

DISCUSSION

The study explored the challenges experienced by members and the best practices adopted within CRCs in Shillong. In addition, background information on members' motivations for joining the clubs and their awareness of child rights was examined to provide context for the study. The findings are discussed in relation to existing literature on child participation and child rights initiatives in India. The results show that intrinsic motivation played a key role in children joining these clubs, with 62% reporting an interest in child rights and this aligns with motivation theory, which suggests that internal interest can support sustained engagement (Cherry, 2026).

The findings also revealed that 66% of the respondents were aware of child rights, while 74% correctly identified the four fundamental categories as child rights, namely the rights to survival, protection, development, and participation. These findings indicate that participation in Child Rights Clubs (CRCs) has played an important role in enhancing children's knowledge and understanding of their rights. In contrast, a study conducted among 247 adults in Shillong found that 67% of the respondents were unaware of child rights. The same study further reported that 88% lacked knowledge

of the right to survival, 83% were unaware of the right to protection, 79% did not know about the right to development, and 92% were unaware of the right to participation (Child Friendly Shillong et al., 2023). This contrast suggests that CRCs serve as effective platforms for educating children about their rights and fostering greater awareness than is evident among the wider adult population.

The finding shows that teachers and schools were perceived as the primary source of support (56%), followed by NGO partners and local community leaders (20%) and parents or guardians (16%), highlights the significant role of educational institutions and community stakeholders in fostering children's participation and ensuring the effective functioning of CRCs. This finding contrasts with existing literature, which suggests that children's participation is often constrained by adult attitudes that underestimate their abilities, leading to tokenistic participation and the exclusion of marginalized children (Muharman et al., 2026).

The findings of the present study indicate that when teachers, schools, families, and community stakeholders provide active support, they can create an enabling environment that encourages meaningful child participation and strengthens the functioning of CRCs. Besides these positive aspects, the study also identified several challenges at both the institutional and interpersonal levels. At the institutional level, respondents reported delays in approvals from the Dorbar Shnong/local government (22%), limited understanding of the clubs among local authorities (18%), and inadequate support (14%). Among club members, poor communication (20%), lack of cooperation (10%), and irregular attendance (10%) emerged as key challenges. Regarding Child Rights Facilitators (CRFs), 22% of the respondents reported a lack of motivation and encouragement, while another 22% identified other unspecified challenges. These findings underscore the importance of well-trained and committed facilitators in ensuring the effective

functioning of Child Rights Clubs. As noted by Alka D (2024), sensitisation workshops were conducted with government and non-governmental organisations to identify suitable facilitators, who subsequently received structured training on child rights, relevant laws, local governance, and their roles and responsibilities, enabling them to effectively engage with, encourage, and inspire children to participate actively. Respondents identified programmes addressing drug and substance abuse (40%) as the most successful initiatives undertaken through the CRCs. Respondents further reported that they had taken the initiative to organize awareness programmes (22%), stage skits on good touch and bad touch (18%), and implement various other child rights-related activities. The prominence of these initiatives reflects the relevance of CRC activities in responding to issues affecting children in the local context. Recent reports indicate that children in Meghalaya are being exposed to drug use at an alarmingly young age, with initiation reported as early as 10 years, substantially younger than the average age (22 years) reported in neighbouring states such as Manipur and Nagaland (CNBC-TV18, 2025; Press Trust of India, 2025).

Evidence from the National Family Health Survey (2019–21) underscores the continuing vulnerability of children to sexual violence, reporting that 1.5% of women aged 18–29 experienced such violence before the age of 18 (UNICEF India, n.d.-b). These findings suggest that the awareness and preventive activities conducted through CRCs are timely and play an important role in equipping children with knowledge and skills to recognize risks, protect themselves, and make informed decisions.

The positive perceptions of CRCs among the respondents were further reflected in their willingness to encourage others to join the clubs (38%) and to share the knowledge and awareness they had gained through their participation (36%). Overall, the findings demonstrate that CRCs in

Shillong play a significant role in enhancing children's awareness of their rights, encouraging meaningful participation, and equipping them to address issues affecting their lives through awareness programmes and other child-led initiatives.

CONCLUSION

This study analyses the function of CRCs in Shillong, focusing on the challenges that the respondents face and the best practices of the club. The findings show the importance of social support networks such as teachers/schools, NGOs, facilitators and community caring groups in fostering an environment that promotes children's participation. Constraints such as institutional delays, limited support from Dorbar Shnong (local governance institutions), communication gaps, and lack of motivation from facilitators are hurdles to effective function of the CRCs. Review shows that strengthening collaboration with Dorbar Shnong, continuous capacity-building and mentoring of Child Rights Facilitators, and greater involvement of families and the wider community could enhance the sustainability and effectiveness of CRCs in promoting and protecting children's rights. The study also shows that CRCs are child friendly platforms that enhance children's awareness of their rights, promote meaningful participation and equip them to address issues affecting their lives. As respondents reported active involvement in awareness programmes, street plays, peer discussions, and campaigns on issues such as substance abuse prevention, child safety, and child rights. To conclude, CRCs is a potential platform that promotes child rights and encourages meaningful child participation in Shillong, thereby making a significant contribution to building child rights-friendly communities in Meghalaya.

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