



KALLOLA 2018'- Short Film Contest on Child Rights Theme: Water & Children (Safe Water: every child's right!)

MEDIA LAUNCH

UNICEF Odisha in collaboration with Aaina, launched Season 4 of KALLOLA, a short film contest on child rights at The Hotel HHI, Bhubaneswar, on the 17th of August 2018. The event started around 4 pm with a condolence prayer for the late Sri Atal Bihari Vajpayee, former Prime Minister of India and a great leader of the country, who had passed away just a day before. Ms Jyoshna Sahoo, Senior Manager Aaina then called upon the dais the guests for the day, Ms. Alka Gupta, UNICEF Odisha, Mr. Devidutta Mohanty, Alankar TV Network, Mr. Ananta Mohapatra, Eminent Theater personality, Mr. Ranjan Panda, Convenor, Water Initiative, Mr. Biren Das, Communication expert, Mr. Narendra Chauhan, UNICEF, Mrs. Sneha Mishra, Secretary, Aaina and Ms. Swarna Mishra Board Member, AAINA. The contest this year is in collaboration with Water Initiative (theme partner) and Alankar TV (TV partner).

The introductory address was made by **Ms Sneha Mishra**. She welcomed everyone to the occasion and explained about the the concept of Kallola, the short film making contest on child rights that has completed 3 successful editions and now moving on to the 4th. She briefed the members of the press on the theme of this year's contest '**Safe Water: every child's right!**' that explores the theme of water and children's rights relating to water. She further explained that the contest invites entries for short films (30, 60 and 90 seconds) on the theme and is open to everyone - professional filmmakers, film students, amateurs or anyone with a good idea and filmmaking skills. Like every year, the best five films (1st, 2nd, 3rd, Jury Choice & Children's Choice Award) would get awarded. She appealed to all creative people interested in film making to participate in this contest and help spread the message. She said that she felt encouraged to see increasing number of participation in Kallola every year and that she was looking forward to the fourth edition with a hope to receive more number of films from film makers of diverse background focusing on the issue. She also announced that 10th October would be the last date for receiving entries.

The next speaker Ms. **Alka Gupta, UNICEF Odisha** started by comparing Kallola to a small child that's growing healthy with every passing year and is now in its 4th year, with a 105 films to its credit so far. She also mentioned that Kallola was perhaps the only short film making contest in India that was exclusively on the theme of "Child Rights". Coming to this year's theme, she spoke on the importance of water and how its scarcity, quality and access impacts everyone. She felt that the theme was quite challenging this year and would draw attention to how the issue impacts the very basic rights of children, from growing up healthy, to going to school, to play, to be protected, as water is one of the biggest contributors to good health. She expressed her hope that these short films would create awareness about how our individual and collective actions can ensure children their rights relating to water. She expressed her enthusiasm on the increased number of partnerships that kallola has seen this year and also mentioned that not only was she expecting more number of entries this year but also looked forward to better and wider dissemination of these films so as to reach more people far and wide.

The above addresses were followed by the screening of last year's winning films. There were 4 films screened, namely 'Bachpan', 'Soch Badlo', 'Asha Gobara Ra' and 'Open Door'.

This was followed by the release of posters of Kalola season 4 by all the dignitaries on the dais. Jyoshna Sahoo then explained the microsite of Kallola (www.aaina.org.in/kallola) taking the audience through the different pages of the microsite in context of the process to be followed by participants of Kallola and also showed the Kallola facebook page (www.facebook.com/kallolashortfilmcontest) exclusively created to

reach out to people and disseminate the films. She also appealed to the members of press and the audience to spread the word and share the details of Kallola through word of mouth as well as social media.

The next speaker Jury chairperson, Kallola, **Mr. Ananta Mohapatra** started off by praising the intelligence and awareness levels of the children. He commented that children are as intelligent or more than the adults when it comes to evaluating such films and they can play a vital role in such issues. He said childhood comes only once, and if this phase isn't safeguarded or taken care of, the future becomes difficult. He spoke about children's right to a safe and joyful childhood and how easily it can get destroyed for ever for lack of clean and safe water even if they have adequate or healthy food. He said that its through this theme in the 4th edition of Kallola that it would be possible to create an environment of awareness on child rights relating to safe water. He also said that the media could play a very important role in taking the message forward, as their reach with the masses is much more than others, and it is a very big responsibility on them.

Mr. Ranjan Panda, a leading water expert of the nation, who is also popularly known as Water Man of Odisha was the next speaker. He began by saying that the issue of water has become a global talking point. There are lots of debates taking place all over and speeches being delivered and a lot of times the topic is even politicized, but these do not really impact or reduce the daily struggles in the lives of millions of people including children. Whether it be walking miles to get just a pot full of water in a place like Kalahandi or standing in long queues for water from the water tankers that cater to a whole slum in cities, the struggle is all consuming. Children might miss their school, a mother might miss breast feeding her baby or a daily wage worker might miss going to work for such a chore relating to water. He pointed out in his speech, that we generally get caught up in the bigger news flashed by media regarding floods, disputes over river waters or water logging in cities paralyzing traffic effecting our own lives and we start blaming the municipality or government for the same. But the real struggle that exists on a daily basis in the lives of many is often forgotten or overlooked. He expressed his concern over the fact that the disputes and debates over water have actually overpowered the real day-to-day struggle of people. However he also acknowledged and appreciated the efforts made by many government and non government bodies like that of UNICEF for providing clean drinking water or campaigning for the cause of safe drinking water. He also mentioned a recent movement towards right to play in safe water for children. He pointed out many benefits of children having access to water bodies for playing, especially on health and physical development of children. He ended his speech by saying that he was extremely happy to be partnering such an initiative and expected this contest to create awareness around the topic and take the message far and wide.

The next speaker **Mr. Devidutta Mohanty** of Alankar TV said that it gave him immense satisfaction and pride to be partnering this initiative of Kallola-4. He mentioned that there were many films that a production house makes, but most are made to meet public demands and cater to the taste of the public. With Kallola, he would be associated with an initiative that would give him inner fulfillment and satisfaction. He assured the audience that he would do his best in disseminating the films to a larger audience. He also said that children are much advanced in their thoughts and awareness levels today; hence it's about time that adults upgrad themselves to meet the needs of children and understand them better.

Next Speaker **Mr Biren Das** said that though he has been associated with organizing another film festival since last 13 years, the joy and happiness he gets from Kallola is of a different level. He pointed out that children can be the most effective tools of positive change; hence it was time to create an environment where children would voice their own opinion on this important aspect of their lives and demand their right to safe water. And he said that Kallola -4 would definitely create that environment by spreading awareness on the subject.

The next in line was **Mr Narendra Chauhan** from UNICEF, Bhubaneswar. He drew the attention of the audience towards another important aspect of right to safe water for children. He said while there are lots of dispute among states over river waters, availability of drinking water etc but we should not forget the importance of safety associated to accessible water. Not only is it important to ensure water for children, we need to ensure the safety of the same. There is more accessible water than safe drinking water. Lots of diseases spread through water contamination and hence it's important to check water contamination at all

possible points. He also pointed out the importance of conserving water in areas of scarcity and spreading awareness on methods to make accessible water safe enough for drinking. He ended his speech by saying that through this theme in Kallola -4, he expected a lot of films around this topic that could help spread awareness on this cause.

Ms. Swarna Mishra , Board Member Aaina was the last one to speak at the media launch. She remembered an incident long back when she was in Chennai and had witnessed her grand child who was very young at that time, take an initiative with other children his age at his apartment building to spread awareness on the issue of 'Wastage of Water'. They went around to different households asking simple questions like ' Do you leave the tap open while shaving?' or 'Do you leave the water running in the sink even after you are done?' She said that it had felt like a simple but very effective way to bring to notice an issue that we tend to ignore or overlook. She said that involvement of children in such issues can go a long way and it's our duty as adults to ensure their rights to clean water. She further expressed her hopes on getting a large number of films around the subject this year, which could go a long way in creating awareness among many.

The last speech was followed by a short question answer session, where there were questions on the last date of entry and if there was an entry fee. This was answered by Ms Sneha Mishra. There was also a question on safety of pouch drinking water which was clarified by Mr Ranjan Panda.

Finally Dr. Gayatri Pattnaik, Treasurer Aaina proposed the formal vote of thanks. The program was coordinated jointly by Mr. Biswaranjan Behera & Ms. Subhasmita Jena of Aaina.

The event ended with High Tea.