



## **SITUATION OF WOMEN & CHILDREN IN TEA PLANTATIONS & SUSTAINABILITY PROGRAMS**

The tea supply chain comprises a lengthy journey from the bush to the cup/consumer which subsumes a whole gamut of stakeholders. While the cultivator/ producer sets into motion the supply chain, It involves transporters, warehousing, brokers , buyers, packeteers, retailers and outlets. However the focus has always been on the producers as it involves a workforce of well over a million workers in India.

The plantation sector has been the first sector in post independent India which was placed under a strict regulatory framework vide the Plantation labour Act which was enacted in the year 1951. Since then it has remained the guiding beacon of the industry.

This legislation although has definitions such as " child" , " adolescent" etc , the plantation sector has moulded itself to subsequent legislations coming to the fore such as "Child labour ( abolition) And prevention act 1986 .The industry immediately put forth self-guiding principles of self-regulation and as early as in the early nineties even did away with concepts such as differentiating " wages" such as " child " wages or " adolescent " wages and is governed by a single wages entitled" adult" wages.

In the meantime Government of India and sling with the states introduced far reaching flagship programmes like ICDS, Anganwadi workers, right to educations which has opened up a new world for the development of " child" resident in the garden .The tea sector had been an enthusiastic partner in these schemes to the extent that opportunities for unfolding and blossoming of children resident in the industry had been progressing in leaps and bounds. The recent emphasis of Govt of India on skill development coupled with vigorous pursuit of skill development is acting as a catalyst for child development in the tea industry.

The tea industry by large has retraced all these social changes as a result of which one can safely deduce that the "producer" stakeholder holds forth a perfect example of inclusive growth of child resident in the tea gardens.

Keeping in mind the importance of growth of Children and Women in Tea Plantations, Tea Association of India and Save the Children together have organized a consultation on the subject involving all stakeholders of the industry viz. Producers, Buyers, Brokers, Packeteers, NGOs and Tea Board officials on 17<sup>th</sup> October 2022 at Guwahati.