SANGHARSH
Fight for Justice

VOLUNTARY HEALTH
ASSOCIATION OF INDIA

VHAI

Voluntary Health Association of India (VHAI) is a non-profit, registered society formed in the year 1970. It is a federation of 27 State Voluntary Health Associations, linking together 4500 health and development institutions and more than 100,000 grassroots-level community health workers across the country. VHAI's primary objective is to "make health a reality for the people of India" through campaigns, policy research, advocacy, need-based training, media and parliament interventions, publications and audiovisuals, dissemination of information and implementation of health and development projects.

SANGHARSH
Fight for Justice

Jayanti Sethi, is a resilient Odiya woman who copes with her reality of early marriage every day. She lost her first child and looks after the second born suffering from dwarfism.

Jhilli Parida lives in Kholikote Block in Ganjam and she is yet another woman who suffers from nutritional deficiencies which she attributes to her getting married very early. She is anaemic and battles constant body ache while she tries to look after her young children. She wishes that her situation becomes better and no one suffers like the way she does.

These are just some ugly facets of the practice of Child Marriage which in India accounts for 5 mn child brides every year (Census 2011). Child marriages are the cause of early and closely timed pregnancies among adolescents which also increases their chance of domestic violence, sexual abuse and an incomplete education.

Keeping the dismal state of affairs in mind, 'Sangharsh- Fight for Justice' is a short film which captures the essence of the VHAI Aparajita Odisha programme titled Unite against Child Marriage. This film highlights some voices from the field. The dramatic and thought provoking story presents cases of adolescent girls and women caught in the web of child marriage. The programme understands that child marriage requires long term sustainable efforts, where change is catalysed by collective effort at a block, district, state and national level.