



Care Leavers' Community



ONLINE

CARE LEAVERS

CAFE

REPORT

OCTOBER 2023



**29th
October,
2023**

13:30 GMT

19:00 IST

**ONLINE
CARE LEAVERS
CAFÉ**

CARELEAVERSCOMMUNITY.ORG

**SAVE THE
DATE**

**Discussion on
Alternative
Care : BICON
Highlights**

[Scan the QR Code to register or
click on the embedded link](#)



INTRODUCTION

The Seventh online cafe session of 2023 took place in the month of October, 2023, on the topic “Sharing of BICON event experiences & Discussion on Alternative Care' '. The session commenced on a warm note with the introduction of all the attendees onboard. The session was moderated by Mr. Rakesh Guha & Ms. Surja Chauhan (Udayan Care, India) arranged the technical part.

PROGRAM

Check-in and welcome by Surja

Updates and introductions by each participant and passing on to next.

Session by Surja & Rakesh Guha “Reliving the BICON- Sharing the learning and unique experience”

Q&A Session

Closure

CHECK-IN

The café started with a welcome note by Surja. This was followed by introduction and check-ins from all the participants. In total, 30 people from 5 different countries participated. The majority of the participants were care

leavers. Additionally, there were two social worker & development experts, one from Africa and one from Udayan Care & Reem Amin specialist in alternative care .Ministry of Social Solidarity Egypt.

SESSION

In the beginning of the session, a quick interesting introduction took place in which every participant had to introduce themselves.

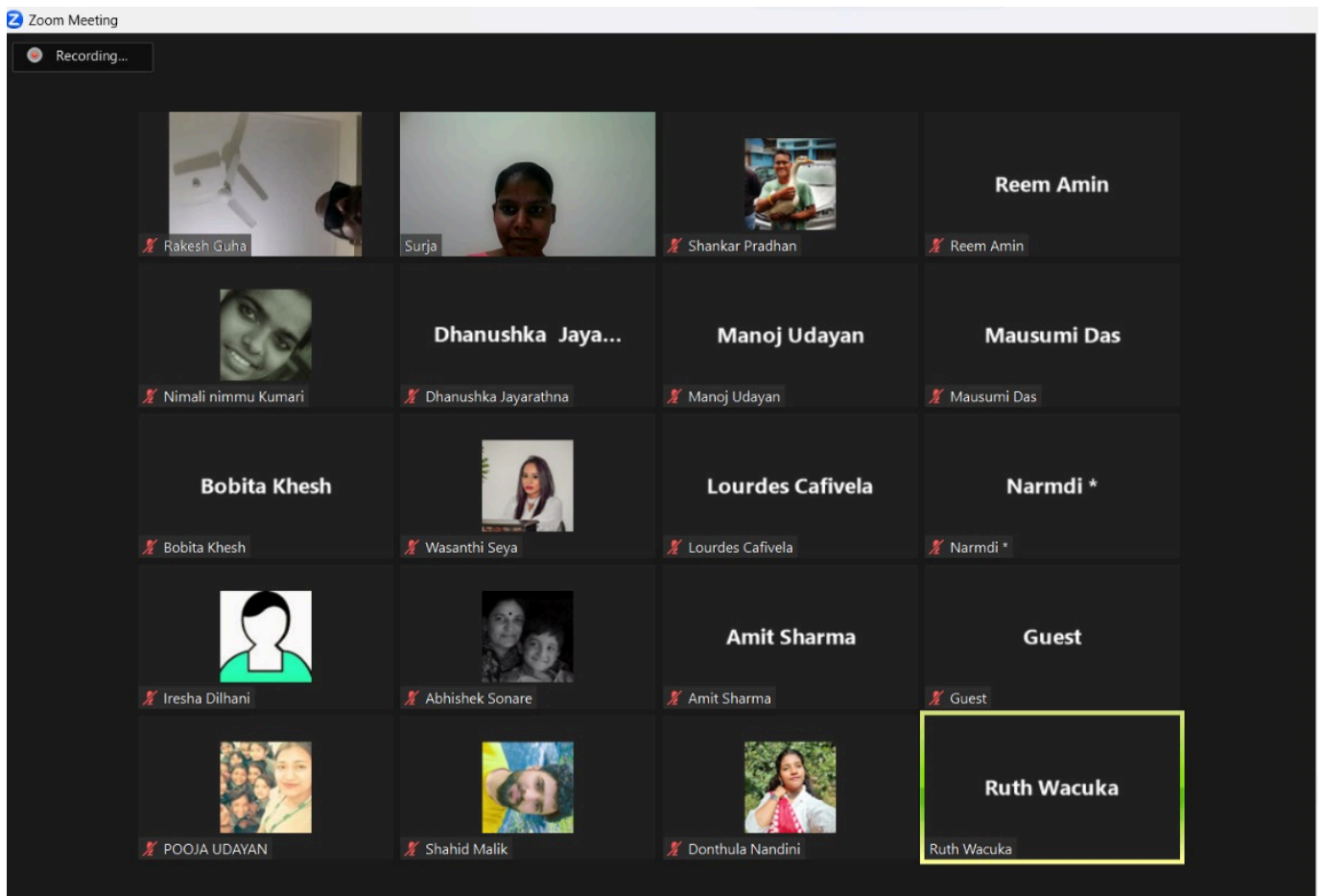
After the Introduction, the presentation was started in which Ms. Surja Introduced herself as the Care Leavers from India and shared her experiences of BICON and learnings. In continuation with Surja, Rakesh took over the platform and shared his unique experiences at 2 days BICON events and expressed his gratitude for the opportunity to represent for differently abled care experiences community and importance of the family for a child. is a Care experienced person who has been in an institution. Then he continues with the theme by Sharing his own journey. He also elaborated the topic with examples and shared his own experience.

The session ended within an overwhelming note where participants came forward and shared their experiences too & all the participants thanked the forum and for the session. They also requested to continue this session for next month's cafe so that people who could not join can participate and share their experiences too and also for more visibility about the BICON.

PARTICIPANTS AND REGISTRATION

A total of **47** registered for the café, after many efforts to disseminate the information on social media and messaging groups. A poster was created containing all relevant information such as timing, topic, hosts, a QR Code leading to the registration link, and was posted on the GCLC social media handles (Instagram posts and stories). An emailer containing the same information was sent out to 873 people from a database created over time from the international conventions. Additionally, messages were sent on various group chats asking people to register for the session, such as the Care Leavers International WhatsApp group. The session concluded with **30 total participants from 5 countries**.

(Narmdi, Pooja Udayan, Surja Chauhan, Amit Sharma, Shankar Pradhan,, Nandini, , Hajra Bano, Mausumi Das,, rakesh Guha, Bobita klesh, Anshula Boro, Mohammad Shahid, Manoj Udayan, Abhishek Sonare) from India, (Nimali Kumari Iresha Dilhani, Wasanthi Seya, S. Murthy, Dhanushka), from Sri Lanka & Ruth Wacuka from Africa & ACNA network, Reem Amin from Egypt & Lourdes Cafivela from Namibia.



NEXT CAFÉ

The host for the next session are Care leavers from Sri Lanka, India & nepal talking about the BICON experiences.

The next Care Leavers Cafe will take place on

SUNDAY

26 November, 2023

13:30 GMT

What Care leavers have to share for BICON

Dhanushka Jayarathna

- I am proud to say that the 5th BICON summit was a great success. I would like to thank all the organizing groups, including Udayan care, for this effort to bring a discourse in Asia for us as caregivers.

- I especially enjoyed the session held by the care leavers, which I found to be very enlightening and successful.

Iresha Dilhani

- I was unable to attend the 5th BICON summit in person, but as a pioneer member of the GNG network, I was able to connect with you online both days.
- I think it is a great platform to discuss our challenges and exchange ideas with people from other countries.

Two Questions

1. What if you had a family today? Where would you be today?
2. Do you think that if you were with your family, your aspirations would have been fulfilled?

Shahid Malik from India

- **Having a family is a precious blessing, but unfortunately, we cannot always choose the life we want. We must live within the global and natural situations that we are presented with.**
- If I had a family, I would be with them. To be honest, I don't think I would have developed in the same way. Being an orphan has been difficult at times, but I am grateful for the many good things that have happened in my life, which I would not have experienced if I had been with my family.

Lourdes Cafivela from Namibia

- I believe that families should be given the resources they need so that children do not need to enter institutions. "**Children are born in families, not institutions,**" so a family is the best environment for them.

Manoj Udayan

- I believe that it is our destiny to enter institutions, and that if provisions had been made for children, they would not have been placed in institutions.
- Based on my experiences and interactions with care-experienced people at BICON, I believe that there are some common factors that need to be monitored on a daily or regular basis. These factors include:
 - Lack of surveillance
 - Lack of interaction
 - Lack of proper counseling
- These factors must be addressed on a priority basis in order to minimize the issues and challenges that care-experienced people face.
- Other improvements that need to be considered include:
 - Improving facilities and transition

- Providing training to staff and social workers
- Preparing children mentally and skillfully while they are in institutions and children's homes
- Developing individual care plans for each child

Inclusivity and Diversity: The session emphasized the importance of inclusivity and the diversity of voices. It was noted that the diversity of participants, including care leavers, social workers, and experts enriched the discussions.

Online Engagement: The BICON discussions allowed participants who couldn't attend in person to engage in valuable conversations and share their experiences.

The Significance of Family: The discussions reiterated the significance of family in a child's life and the positive impact it can have, while also acknowledging that not all children have the privilege of growing up in traditional family settings.

Recommendations for Care Improvement: Manoj Udayan's insights into the need for regular monitoring and improvement of care settings, including proper counseling and individual care plans, were seen as important steps towards enhancing care for children.

Conclusion

The care leavers who spoke at the BICON summit shared their insights and experiences on a variety of topics, including the challenges of growing up in care, their hopes and aspirations for the future, and their recommendations for improving the care system. Their voices are essential to the conversation about how to best support children and young people in care.