

## BIOGRAPHY

**Peter Floriano Borges** is a distinguished social work professional and civil servant with over two decades of dedication to child and youth welfare. His expertise spans public health, HIV prevention, sexual health, and substance abuse, significantly impacting the lives of countless children and adolescents in Goa and beyond.

Peter founded the Human Touch Foundation in 2009, an organization that addresses health and human rights issues on a global scale. Under his leadership, the foundation has implemented numerous impactful programs in sexual and reproductive health, HIV prevention, and substance abuse prevention. His efforts have been recognized both nationally and internationally, earning accolades such as the MTV Staying Alive Award for HIV prevention and the Youth Icon Award in 2019.

In his role as Chairperson of the Goa State Commission for Protection of Child Rights (2021-2024), Peter revitalized the Commission with innovative strategies and sustainable practices, achieving remarkable milestones in child protection. His formulation and enforcement of comprehensive guidelines and advisories have revolutionized the child protection ecosystem in Goa, ensuring the safety and well-being of children across various fronts.

Peter has also served as an Assistant Professor at Don Bosco College and Goa College of Home Science, Panaji. He was a special invitee on the Board of Studies in Sociology to design the Master's in Social Work Programme at Goa University.

Additionally, he has consulted for UNAIDS, UNICEF, and UNFPA for several assignments in South Africa, Kenya, Zambia, Tanzania, Mexico, and Thailand.

### **Professional Highlights:**

#### **1) Exceptional Leadership at the Goa State Commission for Protection of Child Rights (2021-2024):**

In his role as Chairperson of the Goa State Commission for Protection of Child Rights, Peter Floriano Borges has not only revitalized the Commission but also made historic contributions that align perfectly with its mandate. His exceptional civil service, marked by innovative strategies and sustainable practices, has brought profound and lasting improvements to child protection in Goa. Within just three years, Peter has achieved remarkable milestones that set a high standard for future leadership.

##### *a. Formulation and Enforcement of Groundbreaking Guidelines and Advisories:*

Peter's most impactful legacy is his formulation and enforcement of comprehensive guidelines and advisories that have revolutionized the child protection ecosystem in Goa. These policies are instrumental in ensuring the safety and well-being of children across various fronts and will continue to provide lasting benefits. Key initiatives include:

- i.* School Narcotics Policy: This pioneering policy has created a drug-free environment in schools, implementing strict regulations and preventive measures against substance abuse in Goa, ensuring the health and safety of students.
- ii.* School Child Protection Policy: Enforcing the highest standards of child safety, this policy protects children from abuse and neglect within educational institutions, fostering a secure and supportive learning environment.
- iii.* Guidelines for Conducting Bal Gram Sabhas: By promoting child participation in local governance, these guidelines empower children to voice their concerns and contribute to community decisions, instilling a sense of responsibility and citizenship.
- iv.* Guidance Document Preliminary Assessment Report (Form B) under POCSO Rules, 2020: This standardized approach for preliminary assessments under the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Rules ensures thorough and sensitive handling of such cases, safeguarding the rights of victims.
- v.* Recommendation for Amendments on Order on Conducting Preliminary Assessment under Section 15 of the Juvenile Justice Act 2015: These recommendations aim to enhance the juvenile justice system, ensuring fair treatment and appropriate interventions for juveniles in conflict with the law.
- vi.* Code of Conduct for Physical Education Teachers and Sports Coaches in Goa: Setting clear ethical standards and professional conduct guidelines, this code safeguards children in sports settings, promoting a safe and nurturing environment.
- vii.* Revision of Advisory on Implementation of POCSO Act, 2012 in School Setting: Enhancing the implementation of the POCSO Act within schools, this advisory ensures all educational staff are well-versed in child protection laws and practices.

- viii.* Enforcement of Bullying Guidelines for Schools: Addressing the critical issues of bullying and cyberbullying, these guidelines promote a safe and supportive school environment.
- ix.* Advisory on Infant Welfare and Legal Responsibilities for Goa Healthcare Facilities: Ensuring healthcare facilities provide optimal care and protection for infants, this advisory highlight legal responsibilities and best practices.
- x.* Public Advisory: Unlawful Adoption Practices in Goa: Raising awareness about the legalities of adoption, this advisory protects children from unlawful and potentially harmful adoption practices.
- xi.* Advisory for Safe Surrender in Context of Infant Abandonment Cases in Goa: Providing a safe and legal framework for the surrender of infants, this advisory ensures their protection and well-being.
- xii.* Guidelines for Prahari (Anti-Drugs) Clubs in School Setting: Establishing a structured approach for anti-drug clubs in schools, these guidelines promote drug awareness and prevention among students, fostering a healthy and informed youth community.
- xiii.* Juvenile Justice Guidelines: Peter crafted guidelines for the Juvenile Justice Fund and Sponsorship Guidelines. These guidelines have streamlined the support provided to children in conflict with the law, ensuring they receive appropriate care and rehabilitation.

*b.* Other Significant Achievements:

- i.* Capacity-Building Programs for Children's Homes: Peter devised and implemented capacity-building programs for registered children's homes, focusing on child protection policies, standards of childcare, and the management of deviations within these homes. These programs have ensured that children in care receive the highest standards of protection and support.
- ii.* Prahari (Anti-Drugs) Clubs: He established Prahari Clubs in high schools and higher secondary schools throughout Goa, conducting taluka-wise capacity-building programs in collaboration with the Directorate of Education. These clubs have been instrumental in educating and empowering youth to make healthy choices and avoid substance abuse.

- iii.* Training for Goa Police: Peter delivered training sessions for Goa Police, specifically Child Welfare Police Officers, covering the POCSO Act and the Juvenile Justice Act. This training has enhanced the capacity of police officers to handle child protection cases effectively, ensuring justice for vulnerable children.
- iv.* Training Nodal Teachers: He provided training to more than 6000 Nodal Teachers in partnership with Arpan, focusing on Personal Safety Education. This initiative has significantly improved the safety and protection of children in schools across Goa.
- v.* Trauma-Informed Care: Peter organized training for 50 counselors on Trauma-Informed Care in partnership with the International Justice Mission. This training has equipped counselors with the skills to support traumatized children effectively, ensuring they receive the care and support they need.
- vi.* Online Safety and Protection: He organized consultations on Online Child Sexual Abuse and Online Gaming in collaboration with the India Child Protection Fund, Kailash Satyarthi Foundation, and Cyber Peace Foundation. These consultations have addressed emerging threats to children's safety online, promoting a safer digital environment for children.
- vii.* Village/Municipality Child Protection Committees: Peter facilitated establishment of Village/Municipality Child Protection Committees at all villages/municipalities and conducted training sessions for all panchayats, BDOs, and Chief Officers. These committees have strengthened local governance structures, ensuring effective child protection at the grassroots level.
- viii.* Training for Educational Leaders: He conducted taluka-wise training sessions for headmasters and principals on the POCSO Act, 2012, in collaboration with the Directorate of Education. This training has ensured school leadership is well-versed in child protection laws and practices.
- ix.* Cross-Departmental Convergence: Peter facilitated convergence meetings with various departments to address child protection-related issues holistically, ensuring a multi-faceted approach to child welfare.

## **2) Innovative Work with Human Touch Foundation:**

At Human Touch Foundation, under Peter's visionary leadership, the organization has prioritized adolescent health, emphasizing HIV, sexual and reproductive health, and substance abuse, with active participation from the affected population. Interventions extend beyond healthcare, addressing issues like stigma, discrimination, livelihood, and advocacy. Tailored programs for children and adolescents living with HIV encompass psychosocial interventions and comprehensive aftercare services, covering social protection, education, and livelihood opportunities.

Collaborations with national and regional organizations, including YouthLEAD in Bangkok and the PACT, showcase a commitment to broad-scale impact. Despite the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, the programs have gained recognition and featured on the UNAIDS Asia Pacific portal, reflecting dedication to supporting vulnerable populations during adversity.

Presently, the focus remains unwavering on adolescent health and well-being. Through innovative and sustainable initiatives, the foundation aims to expand its impact, guided by a passion for creating a positive and lasting influence on the lives of adolescents, empowering them with the resources needed to navigate the complexities of health and well-being.

## **3) Academic Contributions:**

Peter has served as an Assistant Professor at Don Bosco College and Goa College of Home Science, Panaji. He was a special invitee on the Board of Studies in Sociology to design the Master's in Social Work Programme at Goa University.

## **4) Global Engagement and Recognition:**

Peter has represented India at numerous international conferences and strategic planning meetings. Notable participations include:

- a. Interfaith Conference on HIV and AIDS, Colombo, 16-19 August 2007.
- b. Interfaith Conference on 'Reclaiming the Rights of Children Living and Affected by HIV/AIDS, Chiang Mai, Thailand, 2-6 July 2008.
- c. Strategic Planning Meeting of INERELA+, Lusaka, Zambia, 3-10 September 2008.
- d. Interfaith Conference on HIV and AIDS, Bali, Indonesia, 6-10 August 2009.
- e. International Congress on AIDS in Asia and Pacific (ICAAP): 8th (Colombo, 19-24 August 2007), 9th (Bali, Indonesia, 10-17 August 2009), 11th (Bangkok, Thailand, 18-22 November 2013), and 12th (Dhaka, Bangladesh, 12-14 March 2016).
- f. Annual General Body and Strategic Planning Meeting of INERELA+, Nairobi, 25th September – 3rd October 2009.

- g. International Youth Forum of World Alliance of YMCAs, Hong Kong, 15-20 July 2010.
- h. Strategic Planning Meeting of Youth LEAD Project, Bangkok, 17-22 January 2011.
- i. Asia and Pacific Regional Consultation on Universal Access to HIV Prevention, Treatment, Care and Support: 'Getting to Zero,' Bangkok, 30-31 March 2011.
- j. Mali Youth Summit, Bamako (Mali), 15-17 April 2011.
- k. International AIDS Conference: AIDS 2008 (Mexico City, 3-8 August 2008) and AIDS 2016 (Durban, South Africa, 18-22 July 2016).
- l. Regional ToT on TeenGen Leadership Training Programme, Bangkok, 20-22 November 2017.
- m. PATA (Paediatric-Adolescent Treatment Africa) 2018 Youth Summit, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, 26-28 November 2018.
- n. Joint Strategy Meeting of World Council of Churches - Ecumenical HIV and AIDS Initiatives and Advocacy (EHAIA) and World Council of Churches – Ecumenical Advocacy Alliance HIV Strategy Group, Nairobi, 27th April – 3rd May 2019.
- o. International Forum on Inclusion and Equity in Education, Cali (Colombia), 11-13 September 2019.
- p. International INERELA Ambassador's Training, Hua Hin, Thailand, 1-8 October 2019.
- q. 50th Union World Conference on Lung Health, Hyderabad, India, 30 October – 2 November 2019.
- r. 25th Anniversary of International Conference on Population Development, Nairobi, 12-14 November 2019.
- s. 69th UN Civil Society Conference, Nairobi, Kenya, 9-10 May 2024.

**5) Professional Development – Paper Presentations and Publications:**

Peter has presented numerous papers and abstracts at international conferences, including:

- a. "Faith-based initiatives and HIV" at the 8th International Congress on AIDS in Asia and Pacific, Colombo, 19-23 August 2007.
- b. "The Lakshya HIV Campaign: involving PLHIV in community-based responses for prevention, care, and support - a case study conducted by the YMCA in the Nagpur District, India" at the International AIDS Conference, Mexico City.
- c. Researched and authored UNGASS Youth Shadow Reports for the UNGASS High-Level Meetings, UN Secretariat, New York.
- d. "Positive Prevention Approach: Empowering PLHIVs in Nagpur, India & Living as an adolescent with HIV in Goa: Lived experiences in relation to

HIV services and SRH needs” at the 11th International Congress on AIDS in Asia and Pacific, Bangkok, 18-22 November 2013.

- e. Facilitated Regional Study by Youth LEAD Project on Asia Pacific Regional Study on Sexual Reproductive and Health Rights (SRHR) needs of Young Key Populations (YKP) affected and living with HIV.
- f. “Building Resilience Strategies for Adolescents Living with HIV through Club in Goa, India” and “Enablers and Barriers to ART Treatment Adherence among Adolescents Living with HIV (15-19yrs) in Goa, India” at the 2nd International Workshop on HIV and Adolescence, Cape Town, South Africa, 10-13 October 2018.

**6) Awards and Honors:**

- a. MTV Staying Alive Award (2009) by MTV Staying Alive Foundation
- b. National Youth Icon Award (2019) by International Youth Committee
- c. JCI Youth Icon Award (2019) by JCI Vasco
- d. Rex Karmaveer Global Fellow & Karmaveer Chakra Award (2019), by iCONGO in partnership with United Nations

**7) Memberships**

- a. Member, International AIDS Society, Geneva
- b. Member, UNAIDS Interagency Task Force on HIV and Young People
- c. Member, International Reference Group, World Council of Churches, Geneva
- d. Member, Advisory Council, World Sustainability Congress

Peter Floriano Borges's relentless dedication, innovative approach, and impactful leadership have significantly advanced child protection and adolescent health in Goa. His work through the Goa State Commission for Protection of Child Rights and the Human Touch Foundation has set a strong foundation for future initiatives in child welfare, making him an exemplary figure in the field of social work and public health.