

Dear Respected Committee Members

Considering the government reply to the list of issues to the committee and underlying situation of child rights in Bangladesh Child Rights Advocacy Coalition in Bangladesh\* would like to bring attention of the committee on the following recommendations while dialogue with government in the upcoming session.

- The Government of Bangladesh should make specific and time bound commitments to withdraw its reservations to the two articles 14 and 21 of the CRC. GoB should immediately draft and enact a clear and uniform law on adoption applicable to all Bangladeshi citizens, including amending the Muslim Family Law to allow Muslims to adopt children.
- The GoB should initiate a coordinated process to formulate and amend laws where necessary and also to ensure effective enforcement of existing laws and policies related to child protection. Children act 2013 yet to implement in the filed with clear guidelines and rules.
- The GoB should take necessary measures to establish a Children's Ombudsman with adequate resources and power to specifically deal with complaints on child rights and violations, and to provide remedies for such violations.
- GoB should take initiatives to sign and ratify the OP3 as accepted the recommendation under UPR.
- GoB should ensure that the development of the national budget takes a child rights approach, including the use of indicators, and a tracking system that make spending on children visible throughout the budget
- GoB should increase the age of criminal responsibility from 9 years to 12 years to ensure the conformity with international standards.
- Continue and strengthen efforts to ensure public perceptions align with international standards; that is, people accept and believe that anyone under 18, including those who are 18 years old, are still considered children.
- GoB should define 'best interests of child' in national legislation and outline specific plan and framework to measure how far the government initiatives have impacted on achieving 'best interests of child'
- The Government should take adequate and effective measures, including of setting up strong monitoring mechanism to address persistent discrimination and reduce disparities in the family, schools and other settings, and in particular among

\*The ten member organizations of the coalition are (in alphabetical order): ActionAid Bangladesh (AAB), Ain O Salish Kendra (ASK), Bangladesh Shishu Adhikar Forum (BSAF), Child Rights Governance Assembly (CRGA), Education and Development Foundation- Educo, National Girl Child Advocacy Forum (NGCAF), Plan International Bangladesh (PIB), Save the Children in Bangladesh (SCiB), Terre des Hommes-Netherlands (TdH-NL) and World Vision Bangladesh (WVB)

marginalized and excluded children, including girls, children of ethnic minorities and refugee children.

- GoB should put in place mechanisms to assess the impact of measures taken by them, as well as by the civil society partners and revise accordingly.
- The GoB should set up mechanisms to ensure that the voices of all children, including those from poor families, hard to reach areas, and indigenous backgrounds, are reflected in an institutional way so as to overcome the tokenism in current practice of participation
- All children currently held in adult prisons should be separate from adults, and removed with the utmost expedience to a remand home or place of safety in conformity with the Children Act 2013.
- More juvenile courts with judges and judicial officials trained in child-rights approaches should be created that can hear children's cases on a priority basis.
- GoB should ensure that the courts must be supported in their decision-making by social workers, probation officers or other suitable persons who can liaise with family and community and identify community-based alternatives to pre-trial detention.
- GoB should put in place a monitoring mechanism to better ensure that all cases of corporal punishment are investigated and perpetrators are brought to justice.
- The GoB needs to develop effective promotional materials and campaigns outlining the negative effects of physical and humiliating punishment on children. This information needs to be circulated and disseminated to all citizens in an accessible manner and which provides clear details of illegality of physical abuse of children.
- There should be a law that- 'no child below 14 should be employed as household helper' should be enforced and more efforts should be applied for the implementation. A separate law should be formulated for domestic workers addressing child domestic workers as well.
- The GoB needs to conduct a survey to ascertain the number of children with a disability, including types and causes of these disabilities.
- The GoB should develop a separate comprehensive policy on the critical issues affecting the rights of adolescents, especially girls, children from poor households and ethnic minorities, including mental health and reproductive health services
- The GoB should undertake gender-sensitive awareness-raising programs, with the involvement of community leaders, parents and the general public to prevent and end harmful practices like early marriage, especially in rural areas.

- The GoB should strengthen its efforts to prevent dropout from school, to reduce the teacher student ratio by ensuring more qualified teachers are available, and provide more vocational education and training to improve the functional utility of secondary education, including for children who have dropped out, and establish formal and non-formal facilities for combining work and education.