

NGO REPORT TO THE COMMITTEE ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD ON THE 5th REPORT OF BANGLADESH

Prepared and submitted by Childreach
International and Phulki

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About us

Childreach International has years of experience in unlocking the potential of some of the world's most marginalised children. By breaking down barriers that stop them from living as children should, we provide thousands of children every year with a chance to transform their lives. Our vision is a world where all children have the opportunity to unlock their potential in life. In order to accomplish this vision, our mission is to improve children's access to healthcare, education and child protection; restore children's rights; empower children to create positive change; establish a global movement of child rights supporters; and to use our global voice to influence others to act. Childreach International believes that the best decisions are made locally and that every community and nation has distinctive and unique approaches to finding solutions.

Phulki, meaning "spark" in Bengali, is a non-profit organisation that assists disadvantaged communities. Through its versatile work and services Phulki spreads the light of hope into the lives of working women who, due to their circumstances, are forced to leave their children at home, often in hazardous conditions, to earn a living. From its beginnings in 1991, Phulki recognised the link between children's rights and women's empowerment and the need to ensure a secure future for children while their mothers are working to earn a living. These goals are the pillars for all of Phulki's activities. Phulki strives for the rights of women to be universally recognised and achieved. Through devoting all its resources and energy into working with women and children, Phulki is helping them to see that they both deserve and can achieve a secure, healthy and happy life. Phulki predominantly focuses on early childhood development, promoting health awareness of the rights of female garment workers and promoting the rights of girl domestic workers.

Preface

1. Childreach International and Phulki appreciate this opportunity to contribute to the Committee on the Rights of the Child's (the Committee's) pre-sessional working group for its upcoming review of the People's Republic of Bangladesh (Bangladesh) and its conformity to the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC).

2. This civil society report responds to the fifth periodic report of Bangladesh (CRC/C/BGD/5) submitted to the Committee in October 2012. In this report, Childreach International and Phulki assess the extent to which the State party has or has not implemented the recommendations contained in the Concluding Observations from the CRC's third periodic review of Bangladesh in 2009 (CRC/C/BGD/CO/4) and provides more information to the Committee on the implementation of the Convention within the boundaries of said State.

3. This report covers the period from 2009 to 2014, and documents the State party's implementation of the Convention in Bangladesh only.

3. Under each heading, the Report commends progress made by the Government of Bangladesh in the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, but also raises concerns. Recommendations for each provision will be included in the General Recommendations list at the end of this Submission.

4. Childreach International and Phulki welcome the ratification of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in 2007, the Optional Protocol to the CRPD in 2008, the International Convention on the Rights of Migrant Workers in 2011 and the UN Convention against Transnational Organised Crime in 2011.

We additionally welcome the new Children's Act 2013, which harmonises the definition of a child with the CRC. We also welcome the Protection of the Rights of the Persons with Disabilities Act 2013, the Pornography Control Act, the Human Trafficking Deterrence and Suppression Act 2012, the National Policy on Child Development 2011 and the National Education Policy 2010. We also welcome the establishment of a Child Rights Committee under the National Human Rights Commission.

5. Despite improvements, there is no comprehensive public system to protect children from violence, abuse or exploitation. A lack of adequate support services for children prevents full implementation of existent government policies. Moreover, many of these policies are not child friendly and are in conflict with the Convention. Despite the adoption of relevant legislation, there is a general lack of awareness of such laws and poor implementation by state agents.

Welcomes Children Act 2013

In its review of Bangladesh in 2009, the Committee recommended that the 1974 Children's Act be revised. In response to this, Bangladesh passed the new Children's Act in 2013 which is based on the Convention. The Act defines childhood as lasting until 18 years; provides a comprehensive legal framework for preventing and responding to abuse, violence and exploitation; and legitimises budgetary outlays on child protection systems and justice for children.

Reservations

Bangladesh has failed to withdraw its reservations on Article 14, paragraph 1 (freedom of thought, conscience and religion) and Article 21 (adoption) of the Convention¹, as recommended by the Committee in 2009. In the Universal Periodic Review in 2013, the Government again committed to withdrawing the reservations, however no concrete steps have been taken to fulfil that commitment.

(1) Definition of the child (art. 1)

The 2013 Children's Act raised the legal age of majority from 16 to 18, so it is now in line with the Convention.

(2) Civil rights and freedoms

Birth Registration, name and nationality (art. 7)

According to UNICEF, 31% of children under the age of five had their birth registered between 2005 and 2012². However, serious discrepancies with regards to registration rates exist within the country – 82% of births are registered in the best performing area in comparison with 11% in worst³. This means that there are approximately ten million children under the age of five unregistered⁴. Without birth certificates, children are denied their right to identity and are unable to prove their age. Without formal proof of birth date, age and identity, it is difficult to protect children against trafficking, child marriage, child labour, imprisonment and other protection hazards. Proof of age and identity also help children achieve their rights to education and access other services. Without birth registration systems, a family or guardian can marry off a juvenile child who is below the minimum age for marriage without difficulty.

The 2004 Birth and Deaths Registration Act was amended in 2013 to expedite the establishment of a permanent structure within the government to oversee birth registration, and in 2009 an online Birth Registration Information System was put in place, enabling local registrars and embassies abroad to register births and deaths and issue official certificates through a web-based application. Its 100 millionth birth was registered by 2014⁵.

¹ Reservations:

"[The Government of Bangladesh] ratifies the Convention with a reservation to article 14, paragraph 1.(States Parties shall respect the right of the child to freedom of thought, conscience and religion)

"Also article 21 would apply subject to the existing laws and practices in Bangladesh." (States parties that recognise and/or permit the system of adoption shall ensure that the best interests of the child shall be the paramount consideration)

² UNICEF. (2014). State of the World's Children. Available at:

http://www.unicef.org/publications/files/SOWC2014_In_Numbers_28_Jan.pdf

³ UNICEF. (2014). Improving Children's Lives: 25 years of transforming the future. Available at:

http://www.unicef.org/publications/files/Improving_Children_s_Lives_-_Transforming_the_Future_9_Sep_2014.pdf

⁴ UNICEF. (2013). Every Child's Birth Right: Inequities and trends in birth registration. Available at:

http://www.unicef.org/publications/files/Birth_Registration_11_Dec_13.pdf

⁵ UNICEF. (2014). Improving Children's Lives: 25 years of transforming the future. Available at:

http://www.unicef.org/publications/files/Improving_Children_s_Lives_-_Transforming_the_Future_9_Sep_2014.pdf

The law does not grant citizenship automatically – individuals become citizens if their fathers or grandfathers were born in the territories that are now part of the country⁶.

(3) Violence against children

Abuse and neglect, including physical and psychological recovery and social reintegration (arts. 19 and 39)

All forms of child abuse, including sexual abuse, physical and humiliating punishment, child abandonment, kidnapping and trafficking, continued to be serious and widespread problems. Children remain vulnerable in all settings; home, community, school, residential institutions and the workplace. Of the 729 officially reported incidents of rape against females, 404 were against girls. Of those child victims, 30 were killed after being raped, 83 were victims of gang rape, and three committed suicide after the crime. Local human rights groups reported numerous rapes and rape attempts against girls under age 17 during 2013.

Right not to be subjected to torture or other cruel, inhuman degrading treatment or punishment, including corporal punishment (arts. 37(a) and 28(2))

In a 2012 national study, 77.1% of students stated that physical, psychological or financial punishments were inflicted on students in their schools. Nearly half of parents (48.4%) said that these punishments happened in their children's schools and just over a third (34.9%) of teachers said that they happened in the schools they worked in⁷.

The prohibition of corporal punishment is still to be achieved in the home, alternative care settings, day care, schools, penal institutions and as a sentence for crime. In 2011, the Supreme Court of Bangladesh ruled against the use of corporal punishment in schools, and called for its prohibition in the home, as well as immediate repeal of all laws which authorise whipping or caning of children as a sentence of the courts. This resulted in a circular released by the Ministry of Education which stated that corporal punishment is prohibited in schools. However, implementation of, and public awareness of, the prohibition is still low. The Children Act 2013 does not have any specific provision prohibiting corporal punishment in schools or madrasas although it does criminalise the act of hitting, abusing, torturing or being negligent to a child. 77% of children (both rural and urban) said enforcement of the law against corporal punishment would be useful to stop corporal punishment⁸.

Those students that are abused do not attend classes regularly and often eventually dropout.

⁶ U.S. Department of State. (2013). Human Rights Report 2013. Available at: <http://www.state.gov/j/drl/rls/hrrpt/humanrightsreport/index.htm#wrapper>

⁷ Bangladesh Legal Aid and Services Trust & Institute of Informatics and Development. (2012). Survey Report on Violence against Children in Education Institute Settings, Institute of Informatics and Development

⁸ Bangladesh Ministry of Information. (2013). Children's Opinion Poll. Children's Views and Expectations from Political Aspirants and Leaders in Bangladesh. Available at: [http://www.unicef.org/bangladesh/COP_report_web_ver\(1\).pdf](http://www.unicef.org/bangladesh/COP_report_web_ver(1).pdf)

(4) Family environment and alternative care

Children deprived of a family environment (art. 20)

The scenario of garment worker's children are immensely vulnerable in all aspect and neglected to recognize the rights of their children. Women employed in RMG (Ready Made Garments) sectors are estimated over 2.4 million. These women are migrated from rural to urban and doing overtime work to earn more for survival, which causes a long hour separation from their children. As a result the children are deprived from care, protection, inclusive breast feeding, safety and parental guidance as well.

Article -24, it stated that children have to right to good quality health care, the advantages of breast feeding, hygiene and environmental sanitation and the prevention of accidents; despite this garment workers couldn't have a access to breast feed their child in their workplace as they have to keep their child in their village with grandparents or in the home alone. Due to staying alone at home or without any parental guidance these children are often at risk of injury, drowning, sexual abuse and even trafficking.

In some cases, workers do overtime in the week end. As their salary is very low, they always try to earn some extra amount from overtime. Hence, they cannot provide much time for their family or children. Moreover, female workers are obliged to shorten their time for children due to long working hours and all domestic chores. They couldn't keep their children safely due to shortage of day-care centre. As a consequence children are distanced from their parent frequently that is contradictory with Article-9. The preamble of Article -9 stated that a child shall not be separated from his or her parents against their will. Due to giving less time to their children, they do not recognize the importance of engaging with their children by reading aloud, reciting stories and rhymes, or simply talking, listening and playing.

(5) Disability, basic health and welfare

Measures to prohibit and eliminate all forms of harmful traditional practices, including early and forced marriages (art. 24 (3))

It is estimated that between 2005 and 2012, 29% of women between the aged of 20 and 24 were married or had entered into a union before their fifteenth birthday, with 65% of respondents married by the time they turned 18⁹. Additionally, 2% of women were married before they turn 11¹⁰. There are however lower rates of child marriage among younger women compared to older women, suggesting that child marriage rates are decreasing.

Under the Child Marriage Restraint Act (1929) the legal marriage age in Bangladesh is 18 years for a girl and 21 years for a boy. Any guardian or adult arranging or permitting child marriage can be convicted under the law and include imprisonment for one month or a fine up to 1,000 taka. Women, however, cannot be sentenced to imprisonment and the case has to be registered with a court of law within one year of the marriage.

The new Children's Act 2013 made it clear that all those below 18 should be considered a child however recent media reports indicate that the prime minister's cabinet is considering a revision to the law to make 16 the minimum age of marriage for girls while for men it would be 18. The proposed revisions

⁹ UNICEF. (2014). State of the World's Children. Available at: http://www.unicef.org/publications/files/SOWC2014_In_Numbers_28_Jan.pdf

¹⁰ Plan International. (2013). Child Marriage in Bangladesh: Findings from a national survey. Available at: <http://plan-international.org/files/Asia/publications/national-survey-on-child-marriage-by-plan-bangladesh-and-icddr-b>

would reverse stated government aims to reduce child marriage among girls. The Child Marriage Prevention Bill 2014 is still in draft form and must be amended to ensure that child marriage is illegal for both boys and girls under 18, not 16. The provisions in the draft act raise punishment for those who perform or facilitate child marriage up to two years of jail and a penalty of Taka 50,000. This stringent punishment should hopefully act as a deterrent.

Although illegal, the practise of dowry – requiring a bride’s family to pay significant sums to the groom – encourages the marriage of the youngest adolescent girls because younger brides typically require smaller dowries. The Dowry Prohibition Act adopted in 1980 prohibits dowry in all its forms and makes it punishable by fine, imprisonment of up to one year or both. However, in most cases, the perpetrators are not brought to justice for various reasons, including threats to the victim or her family, bribing of police officers and lack of forensic evidence. In many cases, victims are also persuaded to reach a compromise with the perpetrator.

Early marriage often leads to early pregnancy. Forty percent of women aged 20 to 24 in Bangladesh have given by 18; 8.8% had given birth before they turned 15¹¹. Section 375 of the Penal Code states that “Sexual intercourse by a man with his own wife, the wife not being under thirteen years of age, is not rape”. This is deeply concerning.

(6) Education, leisure and cultural activities

Right to education, including vocational training and guidance (art. 28)

Only 2.2% of GDP and only 14.1% of total government spending are directed towards education¹².

The 2010 Educational Policy expanded compulsory primary education from grades V to VIII (from ages 10 to 14); however, until the government amends the law to reflect new primary education period, the policy remains unenforceable. This currently leaves children over the age of ten vulnerable to exploitation and trafficking. The proposed new Education Law would further embed this policy into Bangladesh legislation. The law proposes free and compulsory primary schooling up to class VIII; proposes a five year jail term or tough fines for institutions which operate without registration; it outlines that corporal or mental punishment of students will be punishable by three months in jail or a TK 10,000 fine; and minimum qualifications for teaching¹³.

Substantial progress has, however, been made with regards to increasing enrolment and reducing drop out from the primary level. Bangladesh achieved almost universal enrolment for both boys and girls in primary education. Out-of-school primary-aged children - 57% boys in comparison with 43% of girls¹⁴. Only 66% of children reach the last grade of primary school - 71% of girls, 62% boys¹⁵. However, repetition and dropout rates in both primary and secondary education are high, and transition rates low. Teacher fees, books and uniform costs are prohibitively costly for many families and therefore preventing

¹¹UNFPA. (2013). Adolescent Pregnancy: A Review of the Evidence. Available at:

http://www.unfpa.org/webdav/site/global/shared/swp2013/ADOLESCENT%20PREGNANCY_UNFPA.pdf

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Dhaka Tribune. Draft education law posted on website for public opinion. August 10 2013. Available at:

<http://www.dhakatribune.com/education/2013/aug/08/draft-education-law-posted-website-public-opinion>

¹⁴ UNESCO. (2014). Education for All Global Monitoring Report 2013/4 – Teaching and Learning: Achieving quality for all. Available at: <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0022/002256/225660e.pdf>

¹⁵ Ibid.

many children from attending school. In 2010, there were 621,163 out-of-school children in Bangladesh with 2.2 million adolescents out-of-school¹⁶.

Girls are at particular risk of disturbance on the roads (eve-teasing) while they go to school. Eve-teasing is a form of sexual assault that ranges in brutality from cat-calling sexual remarks, to outright molestation. One of the most adverse consequences of eve-teasing is that it leads to an increase in the drop-out rates of girls from schools. Parents are afraid of the impact this has on their daughters' well-being, and may withdraw their daughters from schools and colleges in order to protect them.

Aims of education, with reference also to quality of education (art. 29)

Bangladesh has been successful in improving access to education and completion at all levels, despite challenges. However, Bangladesh now needs to focus on the provision of high-quality learning.

Only about half of the primary school graduates achieve the minimum national curriculum competencies, evidence of the quality challenges facing the system. Only 25% of students in Grade V master Bangla and only 33% have basic mathematics competencies¹⁷.

The average Pupil Teacher Ratio (PTR) in primary schooling is greater than 40:1¹⁸. The ratio of qualified teachers to pupils is over 60:1. With so many pupils per qualified teacher it is highly likely that children are not receiving quality education. Additionally, teacher absenteeism in Bangladesh is a serious concern. In one study, 15% of public school teachers in Bangladesh were absent on any given day¹⁹. Illness only accounted for 10% of teacher absences²⁰.

Children also mentioned that in school they do not get enough facilities for recreation. This makes it too monotonous to attend school. If government makes policies that would ensure enough recreational facilities at schools or provide free recreational instruments that would increase children's interest in attending school²¹. In the top four of most commonly mentioned opinions of education – issues regarding quality of education and qualified teachers, and free education and books/study materials²².

(7) Special protection measures

Economic exploitation, including child labour (art. 32)

¹⁶ UNESCO Institute for Statistics. Participation in education. Available at:

<http://www.uis.unesco.org/DataCentre/Pages/country-profile.aspx?code=BGD®ioncode=40535>

¹⁷ World Bank. (2013). Bangladesh Education Sector Review – Seeding Fertile Ground: Education that works for Bangladesh. Available at: http://www-wds.worldbank.org/external/default/WDSContentServer/WDSP/IB/2014/03/27/000333037_20140327122553/Rendered/PDF/862370WP0ESR0F00Box385168B00PUBLIC0.pdf

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ USAID. (2009). Teacher Absenteeism and Teacher Accountability. Available at:

http://www.academia.edu/2380578/Teacher_Absenteeism_and_Teacher_Accountability_USAID_Paper

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Bangladesh Ministry of Information. (2013). Children's Opinion Poll. Children's Views and Expectations from Political Aspirants and Leaders in Bangladesh. Available at:

[http://www.unicef.org/bangladesh/COP_report_web_ver\(1\).pdf](http://www.unicef.org/bangladesh/COP_report_web_ver(1).pdf)

²² Ibid.

Between 2005 and 2012 it is estimated that 13% of children were involved in child labour in Bangladesh, 18% of boys and 8% of girls²³. Child labour occurs more in rural areas than in urban and the type of work engaged in differs by geography and location. The minimum age for work is 14 under the Labour Code, the minimum age for hazardous work is 18. The employment of children in many industries, especially garment factories, continues to be a significant issue in Bangladesh.

In 2013, the Government amended the Labour Code to include further protections in formal establishments for children ages 14 to 18. The amendment requires employers to obtain clear age documentation and mandate that the government should periodically update the list of hazardous occupations for children between 14 and 18. In 2013, the Government issued a Statutory Regulatory Order and published a list of hazardous work prohibited for children ages 14 to 18. The list highlights 38 occupations including ship breaking, leather manufacturing, construction, and automobile repair.

Legal protections regarding child labour remain limited and capacity to enforce child labour remains weak. There are also significant gaps in terms of children's legal protection from child labour. The current legislation predominantly focuses on formal or semi-formal work settings and largely ignores the employment of children in the informal sector.

The National Child Labour Elimination Policy from 2010, provides a framework to eradicate all forms of child labour by 2014. A Child Labour Unit has been established under this policy, which has responsibility for collecting and disseminating data relating to child labour however according to the ILO this Unit is no longer functioning. Under this policy, the criteria for defining hazardous work for children includes: working more than five hours a day; work that creates undue pressure on physical and psychological wellbeing and development; work without pay; work where the child becomes a victim of torture or exploitation or has no opportunity for leisure of play.

There have been very few recorded sanctions against employers for violating child labour laws²⁴.

Sexual exploitation and sexual abuse (art. 34)

According to Odkihar, 404 children were victims of rape in 2012/3²⁵. Of these child victims, 30 were killed after being raped, 83 were victims of gang rape, and three committed suicide after the crime. A UN multi-agency study on violence against women surveyed almost 2,400 men between the ages of 18 and 49 in one urban and one rural area – it found that 55% of urban male and 57% of urban rural male respondents reported that they themselves had perpetrated physical and/or sexual violence against women. The prosecution of perpetrators remains weak and inconsistent.

Childreach International and Phulki welcome the enactment of the Domestic Violence Act, 2010, which criminalises domestic violence and defines it as physical, emotional or sexual abuse, as well as financial damage inflicted on a woman or child by any member of the family. It fails, however, to specify spousal rape. The focus of the Act is on prevention rather than prosecution. It is not being adequately enforced. Further, Freedom House states that police "rarely enforce existing laws protecting women" and that they accept bribes to disregard rape cases (2011).

The UN Special Rapporteur for Violence against Women stated that there was a lack of awareness of laws combating sexual violence against women in Bangladesh. He additionally stated that the number of cases

²³ UNICEF. (2014). State of the World's Children. Available at: http://www.unicef.org/gambia/SOWC_report_2014.pdf

²⁴ Understanding Children's Work. (2011). Understanding children's work in Bangladesh. Available at: http://ucw-project.org/attachment/Bangladesh_child_labour_report20111125_094656.pdf

²⁵ U.S. Department of State. (2013). Human Rights Report 2013. Available at: <http://www.state.gov/j/drl/rls/hrrpt/humanrightsreport/index.htm#wrapper>

reported remain small, largely due to lack of responsiveness by the justice system, pressure to withdraw complaints by local police and also the length of proceedings.

Recommendations

- Sign and ratify the new Optional Protocol to CRC on a communications procedure at the earliest opportunity
- The Government of Bangladesh should make specific and time bound commitment to withdraw its reservations to the two articles of the Convention
- The Constitution of Bangladesh must be amended to include provisions on the minimum age of a child to ensure that all those under the age of 18 are classified as a child; to ensure that education is considered free and compulsory

Birth registration

- The Government of Bangladesh should apply all necessary means to accelerate free of charge birth registration for all children born within the national territory
- The Government must carry out further information and awareness-raising campaigns for parents and the community at large on the need to register births
- Ensure that all children born in Bangladesh gain citizenship status

Violence against children, abuse and neglect

- Enforce existing laws to prohibit and eliminate corporal punishment in both schools and the home
- Raise public awareness of this prohibition to transform societal attitudes towards disciplining of children and to prevent corporal punishment at home, in schools, institutions and workplaces
- Advocating and modelling non-violence forms of discipline in the family, communities and schools will help transform societal attitudes towards the disciplining of children and to hence help prevent corporal punishment at home, in schools, institutions and workplaces
- Needs to undertake a study to assess the scope, nature and causes of sexual abuse to develop a comprehensive strategy – develop, reform and strengthen appropriate legislative measures, take appropriate measures to ensure prompt prosecution of perpetrators, ensure child victims of sexual exploitation are not criminalised/penalised, take appropriate measures to prevent sexual exploitation and prostitution of children, train law-enforcement officials, social workers, judges and prosecutors on how to receive, monitor and investigate complaints, prioritise recover assistance and ensure education and training as well as psychological assistance and counselling

Children deprived of a family environment

- The Government of Bangladesh must establish mechanisms to ensure that women employed in factories are not forced to leave their children for substantial periods of time to work

- The Government must ensure that factories possess day-care centres for young children to ensure that women are not separated from their children and that their children are looked after to a high standard while they are working

Harmful traditional practices

- Ensure the full implementation of existing laws such as the Child Marriage Restraint Act, the Dowry Prohibition Act and the Prevention of Women and Children Repression Act to ensure that parties involved in child marriage are identified and prosecuted, this may involve increasing penalties
- The draft Child Marriage Restraint Act needs to be finalised quickly and must include gender equal minimum ages of marriage for girls and boys, both of which should be set at 18, not 16 as indicated by media reports
- Deploy additional and more coordinated efforts to protect children from early and forced marriages including through public awareness campaigns and universal marriage registration
- Promote girls' access to secondary education as this has proven to be a key factor in delaying child marriage
- Public education campaigns that include special training for police and other law enforcement officers are essential to orient and sensitise them regarding the negative consequences of early marriage and how to sensitively deal with child victims
- Expand assistance to victims of child marriage including social support and access to education and vocational training programmes
- Marital rape must be criminalised – sex without consent in a marriage is rape irrespective of the person's age. The existence of a law criminalising early marriage while the existence of another law which allows for marital rape so long as the bride is over the age of 13 completely undermines the criminalisation of early marriage
- We urge the Government of Bangladesh to introduce gender-sensitive awareness-raising programmes with the involvement of key community individuals, families as well as the general public to highlight the dangers of early marriage and damaging effects it has on girls' well-being and their education

Education

- Increase allocation of resources to implement free and compulsory education to children as specified in the National Education Policy and the forthcoming Education Act
- The draft Education Law must:
 - Clearly mention that every primary school will have an adequate number of trained teachers who will receive pre-service and in-service training with built-in components on gender sensitivity, non-discrimination, and human rights
 - It must include a provision which states that human rights education will become a crucial part of the curriculum in Bangladesh
 - The Law must clearly define the responsibilities, duties and obligations of different parties like the state and government, local government, school authorities, parents, teachers and communities

- Must include provisions on adequate school infrastructure including appropriate number of classrooms, with adequate and separate sanitation facilities for both girls and boys
- Must include a provision on the role of the state in providing midday meals
- Ensure the social security of girls at school and on their way to school to stop eve-teasing and sexual assaults that force them to drop out of formal education – conduct awareness-raising campaigns in schools and communities to combat the mistreatment of children and prevent bullying and sexual harassment of children in schools and on the way to school, especially of girls
- Students at risk of non-attendance should be supported with stipends programmes to ensure attendance at school and the indirect costs of education such as uniforms should be reduced and subsidised by the government
- Strengthen efforts to further increase the enrolment in primary school and effectively prevent dropout from school
- Work towards improving the transition rate of children from primary to secondary school and work towards reducing dropout rates

Child labour

- Ratify ILO Convention No. 138 (minimum age)
- Enforce the law to explicitly prohibit the employment of children under the age of 18 in hazardous work
- The Government of Bangladesh must establish a safety net programme to provide required financial and social benefits to those in need to stop families being forced to send their children out to work