

Bringing Children Back to Schools

ভার্তুয়াল মংলাপ

অতিমারি-উত্তর শিশুদের স্কুলে ফেরা

মোমবার, ২৫ অক্টোবর ২০২১
মকাল ১১ টা

আয়োজনে

 Citizen's Platform for SDGs, Bangladesh
এসডিজি বাস্তবায়নে নাগরিক প্ল্যাটফর্ম, বাংলাদেশ

 মরামরি দেখুন
মানুষের জন্য ফাউন্ডেশন
এবং নাগরিক প্ল্যাটফর্মের
ফেসবুক পেইজ থেকে



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বাল্য বিয়ের শিকার **মেয়েটি** স্বামী ও শাশুড়ির নির্যাতনের কারণে মৃত সন্তান জন্ম দেওয়ার পর নিজ গায়ে কেরোসিন ও আগুন দিয়ে আত্মহত্যার চেষ্টা করে এবং ১২ ঘন্টা পর ১৬ অক্টোবর ২০২১ মারা যায়।



হ্যাটট্রিক কন্যা স্বরলিকা এখন সংসার সামলাচ্ছে

ছবির মেয়েটি ২০১৭ সালে বঙ্গমাতা শেখ ফজিলাতুন্নেছা মুজিব সরকারি প্রাথমিক বিদ্যালয় গোল্ডকাপে 'হ্যাটট্রিক কন্যা'র খ্যাতি পেয়েছিল। জাতীয় পর্যায়ের সেমিফাইনালে তার দল হারলেও প্রধানমন্ত্রী শেখ হাসিনার হাত থেকে টুর্নামেন্টের সেরা খেলোয়াড়ের পুরস্কার নিয়েছিল সে। করোনার সময় মেয়েটি বাল্য বিয়ের শিকার হয়েছে। এবং সে শুধু একা নয়, তার বিদ্যালয়ের ফুটবল দলের সাতজন কিশোরী ফুটবল মাঠের বদলে এখন সামলাচ্ছে সংসার।



ছেলেটি করোনার পূর্বে তৃতীয় শ্রেণীতে পড়াশুনা করতো পাশাপাশি ওয়েল্ডিং ফ্যাক্টরিতে কাজ করতো। করোনার সময় সে কাজ হারায়। বর্তমানে ফ্যাক্টরির বেতন কমে যাওয়ায় সে ওয়েল্ডিং ফ্যাক্টরির পাশাপাশি এ্যালুমিনিয়াম কারখানায়ও কাজ নিয়েছে।

Background

- Currently, 4.3 percent of children (between the ages of 5 and 14) in Bangladesh are engaged in hazardous work.
- 51% of young women in Bangladesh are married before 18 years (MICS 2019)
- During Lockdown MJF rapid survey in 21 districts revealed 13000 girls were married at age ranging from 10 to 17.
- The scenario is alarming as per newspaper reports after schools reopened in September 2021.
- Many schools across the country in Grade 9 and 10 are devoid of girls
- Recent UNESCO UNICEF reports reveals that lives of 37 million children are disrupted due to the Pandemic
- One of the fall out is children being forced into work and hazardous work.

Objective of the Webinar

To bring to the attention of policy and decision makers the alarming situation of children across Bangladesh in terms of their well-being, growth and development. Also to discuss the role of relevant stakeholders (relevant authorities, Go/NGOs/CSO and Parents/teachers) in preventing early marriage and hazardous child labor.

Reasons for Child Marriage during COVID-19

COVID-19 increased vulnerabilities, exacerbating existing social norms and beliefs:

- **Poverty worsened** due to **loss of family income** (job or business) especially for the poorest. **poverty** and **not being able to arrange basic necessities for family members** as the major reasons they perceived for child marriages. Parents needed to shift their “financial burden” and reduce expenditures.
- **School closure** meant girls were out of school for extended period, creating a “security risk” for sexual harassment and other forms of violence.
- The **local and community accountability systems** in place to enforce laws and monitor within communities became non-functional during COVID-19 or were **focused on “life saving interventions”**. Parents took advantage of this opportunity.



Reasons for Child Labor during COVID-19

- Parents lost jobs when businesses were shut down.
- Lost access to markets due to transportation restrictions, or lost customers due to economic slowdowns.
- Many children entered the workforce for the first time to help support their families.
- Children had to work because their families didn't have enough food.



Rapid Analysis on Child Marriages during Covid-19 in Bangladesh

MJF conducted a Rapid Analysis of child marriage situation during COVID 19 in Bangladesh with the support of UNFPA, UNICEF and Plan International

- Survey revealed that **13,886 girls** between the ages of 10 to 17 were married during the period of April-October'20.
- **Highest number in Barguna (1,512 marriages), Kurigram (1,272), Nilphamari (1,222), and Laxmipur (1,041) Districts**
- **50%** of these girls were 16-17 years old, **48%** girls 13-15 and **2%** 10-12 .
- **Three-fourths (78%)** of these marriages were initiated by parents.
- **35%** (4,866) of these marriages was **registered by marriage registrars.**

MJF Telephone Survey on Child Labor Situation-April'20-June'21

- Survey revealed that 2400 children were forced into hazardous work with lower wages than before.
- 3240 new children came from rural areas to work as child labour
- 2500 working children who were previously enrolled in primary schools with MJF partner support went back to work due to financial crisis of their families.

Print Media Reporting Child Marriages and School Drop Out During COVID-19

6,500 Rajshahi students became child brides amid pandemic

Thursday, Oct 21, 2021
Dhaka Tribune

Date - 03, 10.21

E Hefag News



Date - 19.09.21
Kaler Kantho



Date - 17.10.21
E Hefag News



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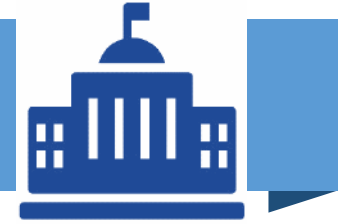
Recommendations



Recommendations

- **Increase social protection for girls and boys** incentives for low income families to be activated during crises
- **Extend awareness raising** against child marriage through **family counseling** as well as **mass media campaigns** during crisis like COVID-19
- **Sensitize and capacitate law enforcers and service providers** to address child marriage, with heightened awareness during crises
- **Activate** other helpline numbers (apart from 999) such as **16430** (government legal service helpline) and **109** (national helpline center for violence against women and children) during crises to assist vulnerable women and girls
- **Engage more cultural and religious leaders in times of crises**, focusing on raising awareness of the main issue but also being vigilant towards the ripple effects such as exacerbation of harmful practices

Overall Policy Level Recommendations



- **Monetary support** to families with children in case of large scale emergencies or crises such as COVID-19 to **discourage** them from **using negative coping mechanisms**
- Every effort should be made to make sure that all **Married and Un-Married Girls are supported to return to school**. The Government should take proper initiative to **implement the School Reopening Guidelines** and **develop monitoring tools for teachers** to ensure girls at risk of Child Marriage continue their education
- **National campaigns** should emphasize that **even during crises, child marriage is still a crime** against the State with consequences
- Government should take measures through their existing mechanism (e.g. Special Official Order and Circular to law enforcing agencies, local government representatives, marriage registrars and education officials from their supervising ministry) to **alert about increase in child marriages** and monitor their action for **proper implementation of the relevant Acts and hold non-compliant officials accountable**.
- Service providers (community health workers, teachers, etc.) should be orientated and capacitated on dealing with **adolescent mental health issues and stress due to COVID 19**



বাল্য বিয়ের শিকার ছাত্রী এসেছে ক্লাসে শিশু সন্তান নিয়ে। ছাত্রী তার সন্তানকে নিয়ে লিখতে পারছিল না। শিক্ষক ছাত্রীর সন্তানকে কোলে নিয়ে তাকে লেখার সুযোগ করে দেয় এবং ক্লাস পরিচালনা করছেন।



Thank You