

Country Profile Bangladesh



STOP CHILD EXPLOITATION!

Children in Bangladesh are extremely vulnerable to and affected by sexual exploitation in child marriage, child trafficking and in online environments.

Bangladesh, a rapidly growing economy, is one of the most densely populated countries in Asia. The nation is home to nearly 40 million children among whom 1.1 million are engaged in hazardous work.¹ Children are also extremely vulnerable to and affected by sexual exploitation in child marriage, child trafficking and in online environments. 51.4% of girls aged between 20-24 were married before the age of 18,² and children face sexual exploitation in conflict-prone areas and other vulnerable contexts. Around 59% of the children who use the internet in rural areas of Bangladesh have suffered at least one form of abuse in online spaces.³

¹ Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics, 2022, National Child Labour Survey

² 2019 Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey, Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics and UNICEF

³ "Cyber child abuse in Bangladesh: A rural population-based study", 2022, Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University

Stakeholder Reach
2024

CHILDREN
2817

FAMILIES AND
COMMUNITY
MEMBERS
1298

GOVERNMENT
OFFICIALS
124

PRIVATE
SECTOR STAFF
348

Our Projects

Community Based Child Protection Mechanisms for children of garment workers (CBCPM)

Project locations : Gazipur and
Dhaka (Mirpur) districts

The project addresses child exploitation in Bangladesh's garment industry by empowering children of readymade garment factory workers through Child Protection Forums, where they advocate for their rights. Families and communities form monitoring committees to report abuse and support children, while out-of-school children are enrolled in early learning centres and formal schools.



We empower children to speak up for their rights, monitor child protection and advocate for stronger systems to address child exploitation.

Photo credit : Terre des Hommes

The Speak Up! Project

Project locations : Dhaka, Gazipur, Sathikra, Bagerhat districts

Up to 32% of children were identified as victims of online violence in Bangladesh.⁴ The "Speak Up!" project empowers children and youth in Bangladesh to safely express themselves online. It builds civil society capacity, promotes digital literacy, and advocates for policy reforms to address exploitation online.

Funded by the European Union



⁴ UNICEF poll of young people, Bangladesh, 2019

Step Up the Fight Against Sexual Exploitation of Children (SUFASEC)

Project locations : Sathkira and Gazipur districts

Widespread stigma around sexual and reproductive health (SRHR) heightens children's risk of exploitation. Through the Down to Zero alliance, the project empowers children to prevent and report abuse while building an enabling environment for their access to SRHR.



Participatory Action Research to address Online Child Sexual Exploitation

Project locations : Gazipur, Sathkira, Dhaka (Mirpur) districts

This participatory action research in Bangladesh examines how children with disabilities perceive online safety and risks of sexual exploitation. By engaging children, caregivers, and stakeholders, it generates survivor-informed evidence to strengthen prevention, protection, and policy measures.

“ Before this centre existed, I used to leave my daughter at the neighbour's house or alone at home. ”

Sufiya

A mother and garment factory worker who was able to enrol her daughter Nila* (name changed to protect identity) in an early childhood development centre run by Terre des Hommes. The centre is a safe space for children like Nila whose parents are at work, significantly reducing their risk of exploitation.

⁵ Down to Zero (DtZ) alliance is a global initiative of a group of INGOs (Terre des Hommes Netherlands, Plan International Netherlands, Defence for Children- ECPAT, Free a Girl, CRC Asia and Conexión) to address sexual exploitation of children.

Key Figures 2024

34

Children and youth actively participate in policy advocacy

532

Children out-of-school access early childhood education

57

Child protection initiatives undertaken by families and communities

290

Children and youth access child protection and sexual and reproductive health support

53

Civil society organisations, youth and communities increase their lobby and advocacy capacities

Our Achievements

46% improvement in children's physical, social, emotional, language, cognitive, and moral development through early childhood centres.



Through our partnership efforts, schools integrate child protection mechanisms, fostering safety and respect in education systems.



Strengthened commitment from Bangladesh Telecommunication Regulation Commission and the Internet Service Provider Association of Bangladesh to filter child sexual abuse material and adopt a code of conduct.



A child theatre group with 30 children led 5+ campaigns on sexual health and rights, reaching 3,000 people.



Implementing Partners

Ain o Salish Kendra
INCIDIN Bangladesh
Breaking The Silence
Population Services and Training Center
Village Education Resource Centre

Funding Partners

Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs
European Union
Garcia Foundation
Ineke Feitz Stichting

Learn more



About Terre des Hommes Netherlands

Terre des Hommes Netherlands is a global child rights organisation that works in Asia, Africa, the Middle East and Europe. We prevent and stop child exploitation, and empower children to make their voices count. We catalyse systemic change with the support of grassroots-level implementing partners. We ensure that children are at the centre of our initiatives.

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