



Report on **Violence against Children: A Telephone Survey during Covid -19**

Excluded People's Rights in Bangladesh (EPR) Project
Manusher Jonno Foundation

Survey Period: April -September 2020

Theme: Decent and Safe Work

It is more important to highlight Covid-19 impacts, rather than a brief explanation on Covid-19 pandemic because most of the time children's perspectives are either overlooked or missed out during natural disasters, public health emergencies and conflict situations or any other emergencies. Children are the most vulnerable/marginalised and always face discrimination, abuse and exploitation differently than any other. Other than that, they are more vulnerable to sexual violence/ abuse and physical/ mental torture. Same has been going on recent Covid-19 pandemic and is worsening the existing situation further against them. The present pandemic has affected everyone, all are busy in preventing and protecting Corona virus spreading, which has emerged as a public health outbreaks. But it will come out soon with a rise of extreme global inequalities. Silently Covid-19 impacts are going to hit directly at Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) achievements. Keeping this situation in mind, Manusher Jonno Foundation (MJF) did a quick survey over telephone to reveal the present violence against children situation at home during lockdown.

Survey Background:

- Covid-19 pandemic is an extreme crisis that demands an extraordinary response.
- Covid-19 can exacerbate risks of violence for Children's safety at home, health threat during this crisis.
- One of the major crisis is brewing behind closed doors-domestic violence.
- Violence against children has always been a social, cultural and economic problem in Bangladesh and where MJF is committed to ensure security and rights of working children in targeted working areas.
- UN Secretary General urged the governments for protecting children at home during Covid-19 period.

Undoubtedly, Covid-19 has created disorders in day to day life and lives of millions of people, mostly as health threats, economic and social impacts irrespective to class, gender and ethnicity. However, children are facing all the Covid-19 impacts differently, which is alarming. It is not happening only in Bangladesh rather whole world are almost in same position depends on different country contexts.

Due to a lack of sensitivity and an increasing rise of disrespect towards them, violence against children has increased in general. MJF examined the situation of domestic and other forms of violence against children from April to September 2020 through its partner Non-government Organisations (NGOs) to find the domestic violence and other forms of violence that took place against children particularly in MJF working areas. The main objective of this survey was to reach the beneficiaries with a message from MJF that they are not alone during this lockdown situation.



Quick telephone survey



Total respondents: 33000



Survey areas: 8 districts



Data collected by 11 Partners of MJF



Discussion with MJF Partners,
stakeholders and government
counterpart

Basic Concept:

Violence victims and survivors are not alone:

- Inform beneficiaries that MJF and partners are beside them to support
- Provide counseling support
- Liaison with government for services
- Ensure that partners and local community leaders maintains close contact with them

The objective of the activity was to figure out the identified working children in working areas are available or not.

MJF Decent and Safe Work programme under Excluded People’s Rights in Bangladesh (EPR) Project was taken an initiative and provided technical support to the partner NGOs for tracking identified working children in project implementing areas. Accordingly MJF management collected information and data from fields through mobile phone communication with respective community leaders, parents, children, representatives of local child protection committees.

During the reporting period 11PNGOs were tracking their identified working children and come up with following results.

- A total of 25323 children were tracking in project implementing areas out of 33000 children.
- 5915 children could not reach by the PNGOs due to permanent/ temporary migration to other locations.
- Apart from previous numbers 7800 new children reported an involvement with hazardous work
- 2400 children were involved hazardous work with less wages than previous one.
- 3240 new children identified in their working areas those who were come from rural areas.
- About 2500 children back to work due to financial crisis of their family, who were enrolled in primary education through the project intervention.
- Girl children are at risk of potential child bride. MJF is receiving information from PNGOs that girl child marriage incidences are occurring in the community. In reality, many complex factors that drive girl child marriage in stable environments are exacerbated in emergency settings.
- School closures will also have long-term impacts on girls’ children particularly for poorer and more remote area’s families– they might unable to return after prolonged absence, as education become unaffordable due to economic distress or girls get married before 18.