



**CHILD FRIENDLY
RECOMMENDATIONS
FROM THE EXCHANGE
BETWEEN WORKING
CHILDREN AND
UN CHILD RIGHTS
EXPERTS**



The Recommendations were created through workshops with children in child labour. 46 working children took part in workshops in Nepal and Bangladesh in December 2023/January 2024, supported by [CLARISSA](#) and [Dialogue Works](#), where they discussed their experiences of child labour and agreed on recommendations in relation to eliminating the worst forms of child labour.

All children who took part in the workshops have experience working in the worst forms of child labour and some were children with disabilities. Their experiences of child labour included:

- ▶ working in the adult entertainment industry – e.g. in dance bars, massage parlours serving customers, working in kitchens
- ▶ working in the leather sector – e.g. in small workshops making leather products such as gloves, shoes etc.
- ▶ working as domestic workers – e.g. in homes doing cleaning, cooking or caring for children
- ▶ working on the streets – as street vendors, rag pickers or in transportation



RECOMMENDATIONS FROM WORKING CHILDREN IN NEPAL

Create/adopt a proper definition of worst forms of child labour, hazardous and risky work. Allow children to do suitable and dignified work.

1. We want to work in safe and dignified working environments that suit our capacity and that help us to learn skills while respecting our traditional and cultural norms. The work must be safe, paid fairly and allow us to continue our studies.
2. Rather than categorising whole sectors as ‘worst forms of child labour’, we want the activities performed within these sectors to be identified as safe or hazardous so that children above the minimum working age can engage themselves in safe work.
3. We want the employers to provide us with formal agreements or contract documents. We demand to be paid fairly based on the number of hours we work.
4. We want our families, communities and society in general to develop a better awareness of our work to help create positive attitudes towards working children which can be achieved through awareness and behaviour change programmes.
5. Laws for prohibiting and regulating child labour need to incorporate local context and as such should be developed or amended in consultation with working children like us. Work performed by children should be safe and should enable working children, including those with disabilities, to learn adequate skills for future career.



6. We feel that the sentencing and fines in current policy and laws for abusive and exploitative employers are not enough to deter the exploitation of children and so should be increased. In addition, any compensation agreed in these matters should be awarded to the child victim.
7. During natural disasters and pandemics, we want appropriate support to be provided to working children such as relief materials, emergency food, shelter, clothes medicines along with economic support and safe working environments.

We want our right to free, accessible and quality education to be fulfilled. Ensure school environments are inclusive and friendly towards working children.

8. We want schools to be inclusive and treat working children equally and with the same respect as other children. For example, we don't want school staff to punish us if we are late for school because of our work.
9. We want more technical and vocational education included in school curricula so that children like us can develop the appropriate skills to support us in the future.
10. We want accessible and quality education with facilities such as libraries, laboratories and internet access, even in rural schools, so that children like us need not move to urban areas to engage ourselves in the labour sector in order to support the costs of our formal education.
11. We want schools to provide working children with the necessary education materials (books, stationery, uniforms, and lunch) and provide scholarships to children who are vulnerable or at risk of entering into labour.
12. We want schools to have disability friendly structures and classrooms, ensuring that schooling is accessible and supportive for all children with disabilities.



Children are safer in families that listen and communicate well. Ensure our right to parental care; provide job opportunities and vocational trainings to our parents.

13. We want parents to understand our feelings and communicate better with us. From our experience, if parents can understand the realities of child labour, they are less likely to send children to risky and hazardous work environments - at home or elsewhere.
14. Provide opportunities to our parents to access income. Families should have sufficient resources to meet children's basic needs for food, clothes, health care, and education, so that children need not work as labourers to meet these needs.
15. Provide positive parenting education to parents and ensure our right to parental care.

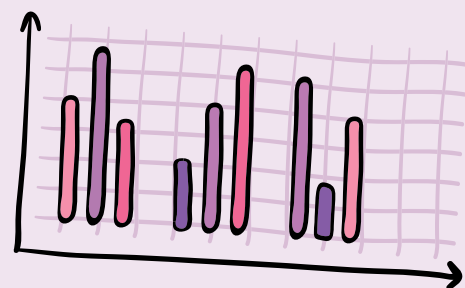
Working children demand to be heard and seen. Listen to us and respect our opinions and recommendations. We want to participate actively in every decision-making process that affects our lives.



- 16.** We want our government to actively promote different kinds of participatory spaces at schools and at local and federal government levels, that ensure the active and meaningful participation of marginalized and working children. Every action, plan and programme targeting working children should be informed by working children from different children's committees, councils, networks or associations.
- 17.** Create more opportunities for children working in the worst forms of child labour to influence international bodies, such as the UN or the ILO. We want opportunities to share our experiences, opinions, and recommendations with those in positions of power.

Strengthen the role of local level government in supporting working children and building their capacity. Make federal government more accountable towards child workers.

- 18.** We want local level government offices to collect and maintain data on working children within their area. This helps to monitor the situation of working children, their engagement in different sectors, the specific work performed by children and to better plan programmes to support such children and their families.
- 19.** We want local and federal governments to inform children about their rights as children and about national policies, rules and regulations on child labour.
- 20.** The government should have effective monitoring systems and plans in place at all levels to ensure that policies are being implemented effectively. There should be labour inspectors or monitoring officers/police in place along with child welfare officers at all local government levels.
- 21.** We want Ward (local government) offices to provide social security services (such as education, nutrition, health services and vital registration, birth certificate, disability ID) to working children and children at risk of labour exploitation and sufficient, fixed budgets should be allocated for these children in the respective Wards.
- 22.** We want national government to shift their focus from the formal to informal sector and prioritise child labour in the informal sector. Child labour in many sectors is hidden and many children are recruited as labourers in the informal sector.

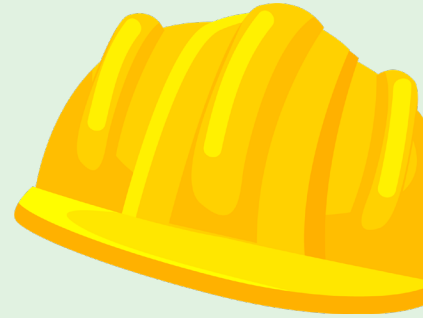


RECOMMENDATIONS FROM WORKING CHILDREN IN BANGLADESH



Protect us from hazardous work:

1. We should be protected from hazardous working conditions through the use of occupational health safety (OHS) measures.
2. Training should be provided by employers on how to use OHS equipment (use of gloves, mask, eyeglasses, aprons, protective shoes, caps, pictorial safety instructions, etc.) to avoid accidents and injuries.
3. Our workplace environment should be improved by employers. This includes improving child workers' sitting arrangements to help to reduce waist pains, protecting children from direct sun light for long hours, ensuring adequate light and good ventilation, etc.



Improve our working conditions:

4. Our employers should not assign us to perform unsafe and risky jobs, e.g. carrying heavy goods (piles of raw hide, wet blue leather or dry leather, chemical containers) from one place to another or cutting big pieces of leather into hundreds of small pieces with scissors, etc.
5. Employers should not make us work for long hours.
6. Employers should not coerce, scold or torture us to work harder, work longer hours or for mistakes while working.
7. The government should fix a minimum age for child workers like us who work in small informal businesses.



Include children with disabilities in education and livelihood opportunities:

8. Government and school authorities should ensure a disability-friendly school environment, infrastructure and technology for working children with disabilities, so that we can continue our education at mainstream government primary, secondary technical and special schools (where necessary).
9. The government should ensure access to livelihood skills training, business capital and livelihood resources for children with disabilities like us to start small businesses.
10. City Corporation, Police and the Bangladesh Road Transport Authority should ensure disability-friendly transport, safe roads, disability-friendly footpaths and cycle paths to allow us to access work and schooling.



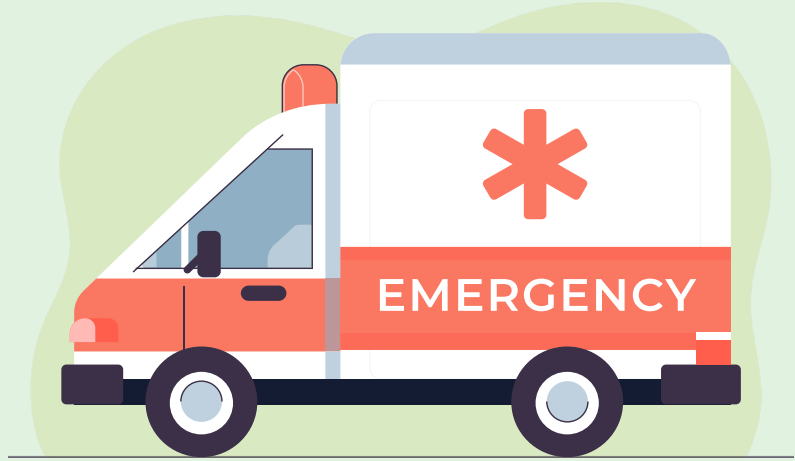
Enable us to combine working and schooling:

11. We want to be given the opportunity to work along with our study at schools and skill development centres. This includes being able to do part-time or flexible education.
12. We want schooling to be provided at an affordable rate or free of cost.
13. The Ministry of Mass and Primary Education should ensure the completion of primary education by all child workers through supporting vulnerable families with cash or food support so that we can continue going to school.
14. The government and NGOs should support us and our family members through ensuring access to primary, technical and entrepreneurial education.



Ensure that we have access to healthcare:

- 15.** Government and employers should ensure universal access to primary health care.
- 16.** We should have access to immediate and emergency medical support for accidental and occupational injuries (cut injury, burn injury, splashing of chemicals, falling from height etc.).
- 17.** We should be allowed to have a leave of absence for ill health and medical treatment and still be paid our salary or wage.
- 18.** Employers should ensure accessibility of the workplace and should design working arrangements according to the needs of Children with Disability.



Provide cash support for our families:

- 19.** The Department of Social Services should provide us with benefits or allowances (direct cash transfers) to the families of child workers to help withdraw children from child labour and to compensate for the loss of income from working children.
- 20.** The Ministry of Food of the Government should provide us and our families with food at a subsidized rates.
- 21.** The government and NGOs should support us and our family members by ensuring access to microcredit, financial and livelihood resources and access to opportunities for developing microenterprises.



Enforce laws and implement plans on child labour:

- 22.** Government agencies should enforce laws to make sure that no child is engaged in worst forms of child labour.
- 23.** The government should ensure safe, secure and violence free working environments for us through the efficient functioning of law enforcement agencies.
- 24.** The government should give high priority and allocate resources to the implementation of the National Plan of Action to Eliminate Child Labour (2021-2025) so that we do not have to engage ourselves in worst forms of child labour and can continue our education.

Joint advocacy on worst forms of child labour:

- 25.** CBOs and NGOs should work collectively in advocacy towards government ministries and local government institutions to promote children's rights, raise awareness of the adverse effects of worst forms of child labour, and to implement the laws against worst forms of child labour.



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CLARISSA works by co-developing with stakeholders practical options for children to avoid engagement in the worst forms of child labour in Bangladesh and Nepal.

The participatory processes which underpin the programme are designed to generate innovation from the ground which can sustainably improve the lives of children and their families.

The programme's outputs are similarly co-designed and collaboratively produced to enhance local ownership of the knowledge, and to ensure that our research uptake and engagement strategy is rooted in the direct experience of the people most affected on the ground.