

Advocating for Increased Government Directives in Eliminating Child Labor in the Dried Fish Sector



UCLMC meeting on January 27, 2020

One of the key objectives of the USDOL- funded Child Labor Improvements in Bangladesh (CLIMB) project is to strengthen the Government of Bangladesh (GoB) Upazila (sub-district) Child Labor Monitoring Committees (UCLMCs) in Cox's Bazar Sadar and Moheshkhali Upazilas to protect children engaged in the Dried Fish Sector (DFS).

The UCLMCs have a mandate to address the worst forms of child labor (WFCL) policy and monitor the implementation of the GoB National Plan of Action (NPA). CLIMB, in association with its implementing partner Alliance for Cooperation and Legal Aid Bangladesh (ACLAB), provided important technical assistance and training to support the UCLMCs strengthen and improve their functioning so that the committees can fulfil their roles and responsibilities towards eliminating child labor (CL) from the hazardous sectors by 2021 and from all sectors by 2025.

CLIMB's efforts established an effective stakeholder platform to:

- Advocate for the elimination of CL in the DFS;
- Include the DFS on the list of hazardous sectors
- Apprise policy planners, GoB actors and relevant civil society organizations (CSOs) on their roles and responsibilities towards elimination of CL and WFCL.
- Develop UCLMC members capacity on CL related laws and policies.
- Coordinate with the district Child Labor Monitoring Committee (DCLMC)

Starting Conversations

On January 27, 2020, the UNO (Upazila Nirbahi Officer) of Moheshkhali Upazila of the GOB called the first UCLMC meeting. There were 35

participants in attendance, 19 of which were members of the committee.

On the following day, January 28, 2020, the Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO) of Cox's Bazar Sadar Upazila of the GOB also called its first UCLMC meeting, where, out of 41 attendees, 24 were members of the committee.



UCLMC meeting on January 28, 2020



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These committees are constituted by the Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh under the government act of 2014 with the representatives from respective government departments, elected members of the Local Government Institutions (LGIs) and selected CSOs.

THESE WERE THE FIRST FULL FORMAL MEETING CALLED BY THE UNOs (UPZILA NIRBAHI OFFICER) OF MOHESHKAHLI AND COX'S BAZAR SADAR UPZILA OF THE GOB AFTER THE FORMATION OF THE COMMITTEE IN 2014

In order to make the committees functional, ACLAB helped the UNO offices to facilitate and organize the meetings to meet the following objectives:

- Inform committee members of their roles and responsibilities
- Inform committee members on CL related laws and policies exist in Bangladesh
- Share the current CL situation prevailing in DFS
- Encourage committee members to realize the importance of better conditions and policies for the life of the children and communities involved in this sector.
- Develop an action plan highlighting best practices for the functioning of the committee Reinforce the importance of meeting and effort continuation as per the original resolution and schedule designed by the GoB

During the first formal meetings, members of the committees recognized the presence of harmful and abusive child labor practices in Cox's Bazar Sadar and Moheshkhali Upazilas, and expressed their concerns to contribute to:

- Assisting in implementing the NPA to employ National Child Labor Elimination Policies at Upazila level
- Collecting child labor related data and reporting to DCLMC
- Implementing awareness-raising activities on social and behavior changes needed to eliminate child labor, while advocating for budget provisions by the DCLMC
- Assessing children's needs, while also protecting them from hazardous child labor abuse.

The committee agreed to continue meeting on a regular basis and the next meeting will be held in the last week of March or early April 2020 with specific agenda on CL in DFS.