



## National Girl Child Advocacy Forum

16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence Against Women & Girls

25 November - 10 December 2021

UN Theme 2021: “Orange the World: END VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN NOW!”  
বাংলাদেশ সরকার কর্তৃক বাংলা থিম-২০২১: “নারী নির্যাতন বন্ধ করি, কমলা রঙের বিশ্ব গড়ি”

### Concept Note

#### **Background:**

The 16 Days of Activism against violence against women and girls is an international campaign that takes place each year. It commences on 25 November, the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women, until 10 December, Human Rights Day. It was originated by activists at the first Women's Global Leadership Institute in 1991 and this year marks its 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary. As in previous years, the colour orange is used to represent a brighter future, free from violence against women and girls, as a unifying theme running through all the global activities of the UNiTE Campaign.

#### **Context 2021:**

According to the latest estimates, nearly 1 in 3 women aged 15 years and older, around the world have been subjected to physical or sexual violence by an intimate partner, non-partner or both, at least once in their lifetime, indicating that levels of VAWG have remained largely unchanged over the last decade (UN Women).

COVID-19 has exacerbated all the risk factors for VAWG, including unemployment and poverty, and reinforced many of the root causes such as gender stereotypes and harmful social norms. It has been estimated that 11 million girls may not return to school because of COVID-19, thereby increasing their risk of child marriage.<sup>3</sup> The economic fallout is expected to push 47 million more women and girls into extreme poverty in 2021,<sup>4</sup> reversing decades of progress and perpetuating structural inequalities that reinforce VAWG. In Bangladesh Violence against girls is not new. Girl Children face different types of gender-based violence such as rape, domestic violence, dowry-related violence, sexual harassment, stalking. Also continued facing discrimination. COVID-19 has become one of the biggest humanitarian crises affecting millions of lives in Girlchildren of Bangladesh. During the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, along with domestic violence, child marriage, rape & all types of violence against girl children has increased. Additionally, children facing child protection risks have fewer available avenues to seek support or report such incidents

The coronavirus pandemic has caused a sharp and steady rise in child marriages in Bangladesh, raising fears that the South Asian country will not meet its goal of eliminating child marriage any time soon. Before the virus, Bangladesh secured a notable development in curbing child marriage but growing concerns regarding joblessness, poverty, food scarcity and fear and insecurity among parents due to the pandemic are blamed for a surge in child marriages.



During the COVID-19 pandemic Child marriage has become manifold and it has continued to rise. Only some incidents of child marriage are reported or we usually come to know, while the rest of the incidents are conducted secretly or unreported. National Girl Child Advocacy Forum have received information about 787 child marriages in 118 unions under 43 Upazilas of 19 districts from their Working areas between April 2020 to August 2021. NGCAF have evidence of this mentioned number of child marriages in full form, including the name of the girl children, their parent's name and their address. But the reality is even more different, much more information has been found in NGCAF's working areas, whose full address could not be managed. The number was not mentioned due to lack of full details. Many more marriages information have been found in their working areas through many women leaders, youth groups, teachers of different schools, community people. However, they refused to give a full address for fear of various forms of harassment.

On the other hand, recently rape has become a serious problem in our country. People from various quarters gathered to protest rapes across Bangladesh in 2020. During the movement, the Bangladesh Government has adopted an Amendment that would authorize the death penalty in rape cases. The ordinance will be recognized as Women and Children Repression Prevention (amendment) Ordinance -2020. According to the ordinance, 'Lifetime Rigorous Imprisonment' mentioned in Section 9(1) of the Act was replaced by 'Death or Lifetime Rigorous Punishment.' This means that rape is punishable by the death penalty or life imprisonment. Rape has not stopped, despite the death penalty being the maximum punishment. On the contrary, it's increasing day by day. Although we have a full law but the law enforcement is less, for this reason it's constantly increasing. But now is the time to stop it with exemplary strict enforcement of laws.

In addition, The COVID-19 pandemic demonstrated that the world was unprepared to respond to the rapid escalation of all forms of VAWG. If we want to ensure that no woman or girl is left behind, we need comprehensive and inclusive approaches that can be adapted to rapidly changing contexts, preventing and responding to all forms of VAW&G.

### **16 Days Campaign's theme 2021 and our Objectives for Organize Program:**

This year's global campaign theme "**Orange the World: END VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN NOW!**" Through this theme will be mobilized Policy Makers, Civil Society and Women's Rights Organizations, Government Agency, Parent/Guardian, Young People, School, University, Private Sector, Associations and Individuals to stop VAW&G:

- To Advocate for inclusive, comprehensive and long-term strategies, programs and resources to prevent and eliminate VAWG in public and private spaces prioritizing the most marginalized women and girls.
- To Promote the leadership of women and girls in their diversity and their meaningful participation in policy making and decision making from National levels to local levels.
- To sensitize parents and other stakeholders on how to keep our girl children safe from any types of violence including child marriage in this COVID-19 crisis through TV Programs and Webinar.
- To give recommendations to wider ranges through TV Programs for taking effective steps to ensure the protection our girls from any types of Violence.



### Key Activities with Jointly:

- ❖ TV talk show on VAW&G;
- ❖ Develop TVC on Air with some Positive Messages. It will be on aired at renowned television channel, Social Media, Website and YouTube Channel;
- ❖ Social Media Promotion: Some Video Messages from different Communities;
- ❖ Organize Online Webinar;

### Timeframe:

The expected period for this campaign is approximately 25<sup>th</sup> November 2021-10<sup>th</sup> December 2021 (15 Days) around 16 Days of Activism'21.

### Location:

The Events will be conducted by Online, Social Media, Website and TV Programs.

### Discussants:

- Chairman of National Human Rights Commission/ Govt High Officials (Policy Maker);
- Head of Funded Organization;
- President/Secretary of NGCAF;
- Different Community People;
- Civil Society Organization's Person;

### Expected Outcome or Main Principles of Campaign Advocacy:

- **Women's Movements and Their Leadership:** Will Honour and acknowledge women's movements and their leadership in the 16 Days of Activism and in preventing and ending violence against women and girls in general.
- **'Leave No One Behind':** To supply a human rights-based approach and focus attention on the most underserved and disadvantaged groups of women and girls experiencing intersecting forms of harm in efforts to prevent and end violence against women and girls.
- **Multi-Sectoral:** Everyone in society has an important role to play in ending violence against women and girls and we all must work together across sectors to address the various aspects of violence against women and girls.
- **To elevate the voices of young feminists:** While the world has been reviewing progress made over the past 25 years since the adoption of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, it is time to create platforms to elevate voices of the next generation of feminists who are shaping their future now.
- **To Sensitize:** Will sensitize the stakeholders on any types of violence issue in Bangladesh, as well as identify the limitations of the existing law.
- **Protection of our Girl Children:** Through those events the concerned stakeholders will be able to play their necessary role for protection of our Girl Children.

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