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| **Chapter-8**  **The Ministry of Social Welfare** |

**1.0 Introduction:**

The Ministry of Social Welfare has been implementing a slew of activities throughout the country to ensure overall wellbeing and development of the downtrodden people, destitute, orphan, poor, homeless, persons with disability, underprivileged, and the children at risk of being exposed to too many forms of vulnerabilities. The Ministry is carrying out a number of child-focused projects and programs funded through both development and non-development budget. The Department of Social Services, National Foundation for the Disability Development (Jatiyo Pratibandhi Unnoyon Foundation), Neuro-development Disability Protection Trust, Physical Disability Welfare Trust, Bangladesh National Social Welfare Council and Sheikh Zayed Bin Sultan Al Nahyan Trust are spearheading these activities for the ministry. Under these initiatives, The Government Children Homes, Baby Homes, Sheikh Russell Training and Rehabilitation Centre for the Children, Disability Services and Support Centers, Government Schools for Persons with Disability, Stipend program for Student with Disability, Capitation Grant for Non-government orphanages, Financial Support for Non-government schools for Persons with Disability, Child Development Centers, Safe Homes for Girls, Cochlear Implant program for Children with Speech and hearing Challenged receive generous financial support directly from the Government. In addition children belonging to the Hijra, Bede and other poor communities, workers at tea gardens, those who suffer from catastrophic illness such as cancer, liver cirrhosis, and congenital heart diseases are profusely supported by the ministry. They are also greatly benefitted by the protibondhi allowances . In fact, distressed children, children caught in the wave of legal complexities, children with disability, and children with autism or nuro-development disorders are the main beneficiaries of this ministry.

**2.0 Activities undertaken for the development of children in the light of National Policies and Strategies:**

Initiatives taken by the Ministry of Social Welfare in the light of the national policies and strategies are summarised below:

| **National policies/principles** | **Activities** |
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| **Children Act 2013:** The Children Act was formulated in 2013 in an attempt to fully implement the United Nations Child Right Charter. The salient features of this Act are to appoint probation officer, establish Children Welfare Board in districts and upazillas, establish specialized desks to cater to the needs of children, establish juvenile court, establish children welfare centers etc. This Act also stipulates for ensuring alternative care for children to go with the regular interventions for the optimum benefit of them and to help them out of their vulnerabilities. | * Manage Child Development Centre; * Manage Safe Homes for women and children; * Manage Children Welfare Board at national, District and upazillas; * Initiate alternative care for the children contact and conflict with law; * Manage the activities of the Task Force to release imprisoned children. |
| **Persons with Disabilities Rights and Protection Act, 2013:** This Act was formulated to fulfill the state’s constitutional obligation to safeguard the interest of the disables and to be true to its international commitment as a signatory of the UN charter for the rights of children. This Act aims to ensure overall development and social dignity of all children who are deaf and dumb, visually impaired, and have certain forms of neurotic disorders. | * Provide cochlear implant services to the hearing challenged children; * Manage schools for visually challenged children; * Manage schools for hearing and speech challenged children; * Manage specialized centers for mentally challenged children; * Manage integrated schools for the visually challenged children; * Provide salaries for teachers of non-government schools for children with disabilities; * Arrange training for physically challenged children; * Manage technical training centers for orphans and children with disabilities; * Develop and expand the scope of ‘PRAYAS’ Schools for Children with Autism in Dhaka cantonment; * Establish and expand hostel for visually challenged children (Girls-6 months, Boys- 5 units, expansion-20 units); * Construct SWID school building for mentally challenged children in Jamalpur district; * Carry on sustainable socio-economic development and rehabilitation programs for underprivileged and persons with disability and children with autism through special education, health care and various other training programs; * Expand and develop scope of ‘PRAYAS’ Schools for Children with Autism at Jahangirabad Cantonment, Bogra; * Construct a Technical Training and Rehabilitation Center for the Persons with Disabilities, CRP, Manikganj ; |
| **National Social Welfare Rules, 2005: T**he governmenthadformulated the national Social welfare Rules in 2005 with the prime objective of improving the socio-cultural conditions of orphans, backward, vulnerable, and disabled children. Lot of actions have been taken under these rules to improve their quality of life. | * Manage government children homes, * Manage Baby Homes; * Manage Day Care Centers; * Manage destitute children’s rehabilitation centers; * Manage Sheikh Riesel Child Training and rehabilitation Centers; * Implement training and rehabilitation centers for children with autism and neuro-developmental disorder in Bogra and Brahmanbaria. |
| **National social protection strategy paper:** Thegovernment had formulated the National Social Protection Strategy Paper to bring the poor and vulnerable section of the society under social protection to conform to the constitution obligation of the state. The long-term goal of the paper is to ensure an inclusive social safety mechanism where everybody will have a minimum income so that none is relegated below poverty level during anytime of national disaster. This system will help a child throughout his life —right from the time it’s in the mother’s womb, during the childhood which will extend up to the old age. This strategy aims to bolster all the social safety related activities by optimum utilization of resources. | * Provide stipend for the students with disabilities, * Provide disability allowance, * Provide capitation grant to non-government orphanages, * Provide stipend for Hijra children, * Provide stipend for *Bede* and other less advanced section of the society * Safe motherhood program in 5 upazilas of Chapainawabganj district; * Safe motherhood program (2nd phase) in 6 upazilas of Comilla district; * Our Home: establish Integrated Senior citizen and Children home |
| **The seventh five-year plan:** The main objective of this plan is to ensure safety, health-service, nutrition and education. With these ends in view, the Ministry has identified the following functions:   * Ensure safety and security for vulnerable children under government’s arrangement, * Ensure safety for disables and take steps for their overall wellbeing, * Ensure social safety for all including children, | * Establish Wajeda Kuddus Old Home and Technical Training Centers for children, * Carry out advanced Child Surgery and Stem Cell Therapy Unit in Dhaka Shishu Hospital; * Implement the project for establishing Karimpur Nurjahan Samsunnahar mother and child specialty hospital; * Establish ‘Jalaluddin Ahmed Foundation’ community based destitute mother, child and diabetic hospital. |
| **The Sustainable development Goal:** Ministry wise mapping of SDGs has been completed. The ministry has chalked out its work plan on the basis of its role spelt out the mapping. This ministry will be the lead ministry in terms of goal 5.4 and co-lead for goal 4A and 4.5. In addition, it will work as associate ministry for attaining 24 goals. Data Gap Analysis and Action plan in this regard have been completed. | * Manage Government Sishu Paribar, * Manage Choto Moni Nibash, * Manage day care centre, * Manage Children Training and Rehabilitation Centre, * Manage sheikh Rasel Children training and rehabilitation centre, * Implement Child sensitive social protection in Bangladesh, phase-2 project. |

**3.0 Achievement of the last three years in terms of child budget implementations:**

In the last three years, the ministry had taken a number of projects for the welfare of children. In addition, the duration of existing projects had been expanded. In these years new dormitories were established in 22 children homes out of 85, 37 hostels were built and projects were taken to build another 31 for the visually challenged children. Three new schools named ‘PRAYAS’ were established for autistic children in different cantonments and two more are coming up. Number of service recipients in non-government orphanages has risen from 86 thousand 4 hundred from 72 thousand. Accommodation of Child development centers have also been increased from 750 to 1000. It has been planned to establish at least one New Child development center in each division. Child Sensitive Social Protection in Bangladesh, supported by UNICEF has completed its first phase and started the second phase for next five years. Thirteen ‘Sheikh Rasel Children Training and Rehabilitation Center’ were established for the betterment of street children. Recipients of disability stipend have now risen to 90 thousand from the previous 60 thousand. The budget for cochlear implant has been increased to 30 crore from 10 crore. The Government has prepared a list of 39 thousand 8 hundred and 41 Rohinga children of whom 9 thousand will be provided with a monthly cash grant of 2 thousand taka by the UNICEF, Bangladesh and already 5580 children have been receiving cash grant.

**4.0 Share of child budget in Ministry’s overall budget:**

| *(Figures in Billion Taka)* | | | |
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| **Description** | **Budget**  **2020-21** | **Budget**  **2019-20** | **Actual 2018-19** |
| MoSW Budget |  | 68.81 |  |
| *Operating* |  | 65.55 |  |
| *Development* |  | 3.26 |  |
| Child-Focused Budget in MoSW |  | 19.81 |  |
| *Operating* |  | 18.87 |  |
| *Development* |  | 0.94 |  |
| **Total Government Budget** |  | **5231.9** |  |
| *GDP* |  | 28,859 |  |
| *Total Government Budget as % of GDP* |  | 18.13 |  |
| *MoSW Budget as % of GDP* |  | 0.24 |  |
| *MoSW Budget as % of Total Budget* |  | 1.32 |  |
| *Child-Focused MoSW Budget as % of GDP* |  | 0.07 |  |
| *Child-Focused MoSW Budget as % of Total Government Budget* |  | 0.38 |  |
| ***Child-Focused Budget as % of Ministry Budget*** |  | **28.79** |  |

Source: Finance Division

Ministry of Social Welfare is one of the most important ministries of the government in terms of implementing the National Social Security Strategy (NSSS) which includes wide dimensions of Children's wellbeing. The total budget allocation for the fiscal year 2019-20 will be 0.22 percent of the GDP, which is 2.08 percent more than FY 2018-19. Of this, 27.25 percent of the total budget will be spent on child-sensitive activities, which was 25.17 percent in the FY2018-19.

**5.0 Good Practice**

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| **Rowshan- a story of an enlightened girl**  When I came to government children home, I was a 5 years old girl. I couldn’t remember much about myself before coming here, but i can remember it was a tough life with poverty and hunger. I heard that my father was not happy when I was born. I was just 3 years old when my father died. ‌  My story stated in 2001, when I was admitted to Government Children's Home (Girls) Khulna. New environment, new faces, everything was new. Within a few days I realized that my life before I came here was very tough. I would love to read. My first achievement in life came in my second grade exam. I got 1st place. I used to stand in first three at Primary level. The care and love of the children's home’s officials was my driving force. That time I discovered the burning passion for gathering knowledge inside me. In the meantime, I started to learn more about music, recitation, acting, drawing and so on. ‌  After primary education, I secured first place in the secondary level in all classes from the 6th-10th grade. Such good result was possible only because of the teachers of the children’s home. We grew under their affectionate wings. By this time I learned not only tailoring but also got computer and beautification training. I was also a champion in divisional sports. I passed the HSC exam in 2013. Many officers used to visit our institution at different times. Whenever i saw them, i dreamt of becoming one of them. The superintendent of our home suggested me to take admission at a University for higher education. Then i started reading more than any time to make my dream come true. ‌  By the blessings of Allah and best wishes of all others i got chance in three universities (Khulna, Rajshahi and Gopalganj). I was admitted to Khulna University at the Department of Sociology by my choice. After getting admission in the university, i always received supports and counseling from the children's home. I got quick recognition at the university for my singing ability, which i got from children home. When I was a 1st year student our Director General came to our Institute and encouraged me profusely.  I owe my current achievements to children’s home. Whatever I achieved, the shadow behind that is from the children's home. Social Welfare Ministry had played a catalytic role in materializing thousands of such dreams with absolute compassion. We are two sisters. Elder one Tahmina Akter was a resident of Bagerhat children's Home. At present she is a Union Social Worker under the Department of Social Services. Currently I am a 4th year student. I want to join the Police Department through BCS examination. I profusely thank Social Services family to fulfill my dream.  - Written by Rawshan Ara Khatun, a former resident of Government Children's Home (Girl), Khulna. |

**6.0 Ministry’s Challenges to ensure child welfare:**

* Dearth of a separate & comprehensive work plan in the light of national and international declarations, policies, laws, rules and plans,
* Lack of guidelines and measures to formulate, implement, monitor and evaluate child-centric budget,
* Scarcity of comprehensive research on the importance of prudent financing for proper growth of children,
* Shortage of required man power at the field level to implement child budget,
* Insufficient training for people who are responsible for formulating and implementing policies for children,
* Poor document management in relation to child budget and child focused development activities,
* Lack of coordination with stakeholders engaged in child-development activities.

**7.0 Child centric development plan:**

| **Type of Plan** | **Action taken according to Planning** |
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| **Plan for FY 2019-20** | * Provide monthly stipend of TK.1000 to 1 lakh 10 thousand children of non-government orphanages, * Provide education stipend to 1 lakh disabled children, 2 thousand 500 hijra children, 14 thousand children belonging to bede and other unadvanced section of the society, * Provide 17 thousand orphan and destitute children with shelter, education and training in Government Shishu Paribar and other institutions, * Provide support to 1 thousand children who have found themselves in legal tangles, * Formulate specific guidelines for preparing child- centric budget, its implementation, monitoring, and evaluation by September 2019, * Arrange necessary training for 750 officers responsible for planning and implementing policies for the welfare of children and 4 workshops for awareness buildup, * Expand and develop visually challenged children’s hostel; Expand and develop PRASH (Phase-2) at Dhaka, Cantonment; Establish SWID school in Jamalpur district; arrange special education, health care and various training activities for under privileged and poor persons with disability and autistic people; Expand and develop PROYASH School at Bogra Cantonment; establish government children Home and small nurse hostels, provide safe maternity activities in 5 upazilas of Chapainawabganj district; establish Advanced Child Surgery and Stem Cell Therapy Unit at Dhaka Shishu Hospital; Establish Karimpur Nurjahan Samasunnahar mother and children Special Hospital; carry forward Safe Motherhood propgram (2nd phase) in 6 upazilas of Comilla district and Child Sensitive Social Protection in Bangladesh (CSPB), Phase-2; these 10 projects will directly contribute to children's development;. * Our home: Integrated senior citizen and children home project; Sustainable socio-economic development and rehabilitation programs; Technical training and rehabilitation center for the persons with disability at CRP, Manikganj; Establishment of Jalaluddin Ahmed Foundation Community Based destitute Mother and Child Diabetic Hospital projects will contribute indirectly to child development. |
| **Medium Term Plan** | * Expand social protection programs undertaken for children, * Formulate a holistic work plan for the development of children in the light of national and international declarations, policies, laws, rules and principles, * Carry out research on the importance of prudent financing and management of budget for children, * Proper documentation and record keeping of child budget and child focused development activities, * Establish Joypurhat Child Development Center and 6 Child development Center at 6 division; * Develop and expand PHT centers; * Renovate Chittagong and Khulna Government Children’s home and the Baby homes, * Re-establish and renovate other child training and rehabilitation centers, * Establish seven centers for mentally retarded children in seven divisions , * Establish ‘PROYASH’ in Sylhet, Ghatail, Rangpur, Bogra cantonments, * Establish training and rehabilitation centers for the destitute children at Bheramara, Kustia, * Establish schools with hostels for visually impaired children at Barisal. |
| **Long Term Plan** | * Employ necessary manpower at the grass root levels to implement child budget, * Formulate a proper code of conduct for dealing with children, * Strengthen coordination among stakeholders engaged in child-development activities. * Establish mother and child hospital at Sherpur, * Establish ‘Karimpur Nurjahan-Shamsunnahar Mother and Child Specialized Hospital’, * Undertake safe maternity projects in four upazillas of Jhalokathi, * Construction of hostel for Sultana Children Homes, * Establish Fazlul Haq old home with therapy center at Shahjadpur of Shirajgonj district, * Establish vocational centers for children of less advanced section of society. * Undertake two projects for ensuring quality education and health for destitute and disabled children, * Arrange profession-based computer training for the inhabitants of Government Children Homes. |

**8.0 Conclusion:**

On the occasion of the 99th birth anniversary of the Father of the Nation and the National Children's Day, the Honorable Prime Minister said, "We will build a prosperous Bangladesh in such a way that our children will enjoy bright future, a decent life, a dream that Father of the nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman had fostered." We should try to create a better environment for children. We must treat them affectionately because our collective future will surely lie in their hands. This Ministry is working unflinchingly hard to ensure that all the under-privileged and disable children get the due share of state attention in their growth which will in turn prepare them to take the lead of the country in future. We hope today’s budding children will unfurl gloriously, under the wings of ours -the elders, and will take the nation to a height of our dreams.