

In July, National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) constituted an 11-member expert committee to assess the impact of COVID-19 pandemic on human rights and design advisories in response.

Oxfam India sought inputs from its partners and #RightsOverProfits campaign allies across India to make submissions to the expert committee around the rights of children and patients. We also engaged with the members of the NHRC's expert committees during the drafting of the submissions.

The submissions made can be accessed here- [education](#) and [health](#). Some of our allies at the state level also made their submissions in broad solidarity with our asks.

On September 28 and 29, the NHRC released the health and child rights (including education) guidelines respectively. We are glad to see that a number of the key recommendations made by us in the submission have been included in the final advisory (many of them verbatim) issued by NHRC.

For education, some of the key recommendations that have been included in the [advisory](#) are:

1. Issue guidelines to prevent private schools from hiking fees, and setup a helpline for parents.
2. Designing and delivering accelerated learning curriculum (focused on foundational skills) may be explored and implemented to recover lost instructional time due to the pandemic.
3. Issue guidelines for teachers and SMC members to remain in touch with children in families with history of domestic violence to minimize possibilities of child abuse.
4. Facilitate admission of migrant children into Anganwadi Centers (AWCs) and nearby government schools to prevent them from dropping out.
5. Develop Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) to be followed when schools reopen including for schools used as quarantine facility.

Further, the advisory cites Oxfam India's [status report](#) on government and private schools during COVID-19.

Similarly, the health [advisory](#) has also incorporated our key recommendations including:

1. Display of Patient Rights Charter in all public and private hospitals, and health facilities.
2. Ensuring implementation of the Patients' Rights Charter, while operationalizing grievance redressal mechanism for patients.
3. The hospitals should ensure the relatives of COVID-19 patients are updated on the condition of the patients on a daily basis, at least.
4. Bodies of deceased COVID-19 patients should be treated with due respect and handed over to the family/caretakers as soon as possible after death has been declared.
5. Access to transport for patients: Patients with COVID-19 or non COVID-19 conditions may be provided ambulance services to reach hospitals timely.

The next step would be advocacy at the state level to push for the implementation of these recommendations.

The #RightsOverProfits team