

Shortcomings identified by the committee	Action taken by the institution to rectify the shortcomings/present status
<u>01. Audit and Management Committee Meetings.</u> That the Department of Probation and Child Care Services does not have an internal Audit unit and that Audit and Management Committee meetings are not held.	Internal Audit is carried out by the internal audit unit of the Ministry to cover the functions of the Department in terms of F.R. 133 (b). In addition, action was taken to appoint an Audit and Management Committee. During 2023 two committee meetings were held and in 2024 four committee meetings have been held so far.
<u>02. Underutilization of the UNCRC data system.</u> Underutilization of the UNCRC data system assigned to the Department for the need to submit timely and accurate reports to the United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child in relation to the implementation of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child in the year 2018 including consultancy fees of Rs. 2,350,000.	By the letter No. PCC/2/2/10 dated 03.11.2023 the report was submitted to the Committee on Public Accounts. An agreement has been entered into with the Open Mind Solutions (Pvt) Ltd on 30.10.2023 to host the UNCRC data system. All relevant officers in the relevant institutions have been trained and are currently entering data into the UNCRC data system regarding the preparation of the Periodical Report according to the Convention on the Rights of the Child. A committee has been appointed on 20.08.2024 to provide recommendations and solutions on computer application by studying the practical and technical issues faced by institutions when data entering through computer application prepared to make the UNCRC data system. The relevant committee had a meeting on 23.10.2024 and made decisions such as how much does it cost to debug the computer application and make it reusable, whether it is effective financially to do it and that it should be carried out through a formal study and the service of a consultation of a computer institution from a university should be obtained for that. Further work related to that will be done in the future.
<u>03. Progress in implementation of directives issued by the Committee on Public Accounts in its meeting held on 04 August 2021.</u> Directive No. 06 – Challenges in gathering data on vulnerable/ at-risk children and a shortage of Provincial Probation Officers among the officers in	• Probation Officers work under the Provincial Probation and Child Care Departments and their regular place of work are the Probation Offices. However, participation and the contribution of these officers are made for the committee structure that discusses the issues regarding children and for the regional, district and provincial committees on child rights.

the Divisional Secretariats and the issues relating to receiving reports and properly coordinating matters that concerns children.

Observations / Recommendations / Directives

(i) The committee emphasized the importance of maintaining a national data system for reporting children's problems by integrating these data systems which are important for the promotion of children's rights.

(ii) based on the information disclosed in the Committee, that a program should be prepared to obtain information at the provincial & national levels for the local probation and child care service officers to take expedite measures with regards to the children that do not attend school and on children's literacy, and to obtain related information from the schools in compliance with the gazette notification issued by the Ministry of Education in 2016.

- Child Rights Promotion Officers/Child Rights Promotion Assistants work to identify vulnerable and at-risk children at the Divisional Secretariat division level through various methods through the joint approach of all the officers of the Children and Women Unit of the Divisional Secretariat.

I. The National Child Protection Authority maintains reporting of child related issues as a national system.

II. A Senior Officer out of the members appointed by the Education Director, has been included in the committee representing the Divisional Secretary for establishing school monitoring committees in each school as per the Extra Ordinary Gazette notification no. 1963/30 issued by the Ministry of Education. Letters have been referred to the Divisional Secretaries informing to nominate Child Rights Promotion Officers/Assistants as the officer nominated by the Divisional Secretary. Although it was discussed to include the designations of these officers in this gazette notification, the Ministry of Education expressed that a long procedure should be followed for that. At the meeting held on 19.09.2023 with the participation of the officials of the Ministry of Education, it was stated that it is a direct responsibility of the Ministry of Education to send the children who do not go to school. Based on that meeting, the Ministry of Education has issued a letter on 02.10.2023. Accordingly, the Child Rights Promotion Officers should refer the children who are identified as children that do not go to school, to the Non-formal Education Officers. Admitting to schools of these children should be carried out by them and then they should provide the relevant information to Child Rights Promotion Officers. The officers of this department will carry out the follow up regarding the children whose names have been notified in this way.

04. Progress in implementation of directives issued by the Committee on Public Accounts in its meeting held on 04 August 2021.

Directive No. 09 – The Post of Legal Officer has not been filled up.

Approval has been received for the draft gazette notification, marking scheme and application submitted on 03.07.2024 to the Public Service Commission for approval of the recruitment to the post of Legal Officer and accordingly future activities to be carried out.

<u>05. Progress in implementation of directives issued by the Committee on Public Accounts in its meeting held on 04 August 2021.</u> Directive No. 10 - Laws, Acts and Ordinances including Child Adoption Ordinance have not been amended to suit the timely needs.	The amended bill submitted by the Ministry of Justice by letter No. MOJ/L4/563/2023 and dated 10.06.2024 has been sent to the provincial commissioners in order to get their recommendations. Apart from this, a committee has been appointed by the Ministry of Justice to amend the Children's Act. However, since the Adoption Act and the Ordinance on Children and Youth has been gazetted currently under the Ministry of Women, Children's Affairs, actions have been taken to inquire from the Ministry of Justice about the requirement of nominating new committees.
<u>06. Progress in implementation of directives issued by the Committee on PublicAccounts in its meeting held on 04 August 2021.</u> Directive No. 13 - The need to develop a system that can rescue children from the abuse they are subjected to through the use of the Internet	The Department of Probation and Child Care Services conducts awareness programs on child safety and also on the safe use of modern technology. The National Child Protection Authority also conducts awareness programs regarding children being abused in the cyber space, preventing addiction to the use of the Internet and safe use of modern technology. To protect children in the cyber space, the Ministry of Women, Child Affairs and Social Empowerment has prepared an action plan with the contribution and intervention of other institutions.
<u>07. Progress in implementation of directives issued by the Committee on Public Accounts in its meeting held on 04 August 2021.</u> Directive No. 14 - The need to prepare a program to create socially-friendly social media censorship to prevent irregularities when reporting incidents on crimes against children	The Ministry of Mass Media, has obtained proposals of the National Children's Council with the intervention of the Department, to focus on the facts affecting children, for the task of preparing a Code of Ethics for journalists, focusing on protecting the dignity of women and ethnic-religious minorities. The Department of Probation and Childcare Services serves as a member of the Expert Committee. And the National Child Protection Authority is also dealing with this matter. (Annexure 01)

08. Organizational structure and inter-operability between Ministry of Women, Child Affairs and Social Empowerment, Department of Probation and Child Care Services, National Child Protection Authority and Provincial Probation and Child Affairs Departments at national level.

Observations/Recommendations/

Directives

(i) The above officers should properly address the problems/complaints related to children at the local level, district level, and provincial level and finally at the national level, they should prepare a program to ensure that the entire process is done correctly and create a monitoring system.

As the Provincial Probation and Child Affairs Department and the National Child Protection Authority are members of the operational committees on child rights, there is an institutional integration and coordination.

According to the orders of the Public Accounts Committee held on 04.07.2023, arrangements have been made to hold provincial and district operational committees in the year 2023 and instructions have been given to formally hold the committees in the year 2024.

An agenda related to holding these committees has been introduced by the Ministry of Women and Child Affairs through Circular No. 01/18 dated 10.01.2018 and the provincial committees have been informed about it and accordingly committee meetings will be held.

Monitoring Committees on Child Rights operate at village, regional, district, provincial and national levels.

When the village committees identify problems related to children, the problems that can be intervened at the committee level are solved and the problems that are difficult to solve are referred to the regional committee for solutions.

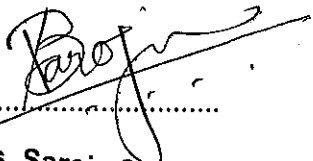
Unsolved problems at the regional level are referred to the district, provincial and national levels.

The National Committee on Child Rights takes rectifying measures and policy decisions related to the problems raised up to the national level, involving all stakeholders, and refers them to the relevant institutions and parties for implementation. Follow-up in this regard is carried out by the Department of Probation and Child Protection, and relevant progress is also followed up at the National Committee meeting.

**09. National Childcare Authority
Corporate Data System**

By the letter No. PCC/2/2/10 dated 13.11.2023 the report was submitted to the Committee on Public Accounts.

The report on the current progress of implementations submitted by the National ChildProtection Authority is presented as annexure -2.


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