



Bangladesh Combined 9th & 10th Periodic Reports

CEDAW 93rd Session

Written Information for the List of Issues

Highlighting the Human Rights Status of Transgender & LGBTIQ+ Women



August 2026



**INCLUSIVE
BANGLADESH**
...INCLUDING HUMAN RIGHTS

WRITTEN INFORMATION FOR THE LIST OF ISSUES

Bangladesh: Combined ninth and tenth periodic reports (CEDAW/C/BGD/9-10)

Submitted by: Inclusive Bangladesh

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Priority concern: Bangladesh's recognition of the Hijra community as a third gender is important but does not provide autonomous, self-determined legal recognition for transgender, non-binary and other gender-diverse people who do not belong to Hijra culture. The State report's silence on LGBTIQ+ women obscures intersecting discrimination, violence and exclusion requiring direct questions from the Committee.

1. Submitting organization, scope and methodology

Inclusive Bangladesh is a transgender-led LGBTIQ+ human rights organization established in 2013 and working in Bangladesh and the United Kingdom. Its Monitor initiative has documented violations through survivor testimony, community focal points, digital reporting and corroborated secondary sources since 2023. This submission is directed to the Committee's adoption of the List of Issues concerning Bangladesh during the 93rd session.

The evidence base comprises Inclusive Bangladesh's 2024 and 2025 annual monitoring reports, its 2026 incident workbook, its joint UPR submission on legal gender recognition, Bangladesh's combined ninth and tenth periodic report, and the Committee's 2016 concluding observations. ^{1,2,4,5,6,7} The 2026 workbook contains 51 incident records dated 5 January-6 August 2026, affecting at least 92 direct victims. Nineteen records were verified, 29 partially verified and three assessed as credible but unverified. All examples in this submission are anonymized and no survivor photographs are included.

The monitoring data are case-based, not population-prevalence estimates. Multiple harms, identities and perpetrators may be recorded in one incident, so category counts should not be added together. Fear, stigma and retaliation create substantial underreporting; the 2025 report and 2026 data both record non-disclosure of sexual orientation or gender identity as a safety issue.

2. Gaps in the State party report

Bangladesh reports only two Hijra-specific measures. Paragraph 152 states that social-protection programmes support Hijra, Bede and other marginalized communities; paragraph 163 states that

the 2022 census disaggregated sex as male, female and Hijra and presents this as a commitment to inclusion. ¹ The report does not mention LGBTIQ+, lesbian, bisexual, asexual, queer or intersex women; transgender or non-binary people; sexual orientation; gender identity or expression; or sex characteristics. It provides no Hijra-specific coverage, budget, outcome or complaints data.

The 2013-2014 third-gender recognition was framed around Hijra status. Inclusive Bangladesh's UPR consultations found that official forms inconsistently use Hijra, third gender or other; non-Hijra transgender and gender-diverse people may be compelled to select Hijra or may be unable to obtain consistent national identity documents and related services. ² Hijra is a cultural and community identity and must not be treated as an umbrella substitute for every transgender or non-binary person.

The State report also confirms that Bangladesh maintains reservations to articles 2 and 16 (1) (c), without a withdrawal timetable. It describes the Anti-Discrimination Bill as a draft. Although the listed grounds include gender, they omit sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, and sex characteristics (SOGIESC). It describes marriage registration under religious personal laws without addressing transgender marriages, same-sex relationships or documentation conflicts. ¹ General recommendation No. 28 requires legal recognition and prohibition of intersecting discrimination linked to sexual orientation and gender identity. ³

3. Community evidence of intersectional discrimination

Period	Scope	Key findings relevant to CEDAW
2024	Charts cover 34 incidents	13 Hijra, 10 trans women and one cis woman incident; six lesbian-coded incidents. The report recorded 28 incidents of inhuman behaviour, 17 beatings, 17 torture, 15 threats, seven arrests and three killings. ⁴
2025	41 verified incidents	Charts record eight Hijra, five trans women, five non-binary and three cis women incidents, and 14 lesbian-coded incidents. There were 37 mentions of degrading treatment, 21 discrimination, 20 threats, 18 beatings, 17 expression violations and 14 torture. ⁵
2026 to 6 Aug	51 records; at least 92 direct victims	31 records involved at least one cis woman, trans woman, non-binary or Hijra category, affecting 53 direct victims. Across all records: 44 degrading treatment, 39 public humiliation, 38 threats of physical violence and 32 physical assaults; 44 incidents were not reported to police. ⁶

Source note: incident-category counts are multi-select and indicate documented occurrences, not prevalence.

3.1 Legal identity, criminalization and access to justice (articles 1, 2 and 15)

The absence of a uniform, self-determined recognition procedure affects voting, education, employment, financial services, health care, travel and relationship registration. The 2026 data also show the chilling effect of section 377 of the Penal Code. ⁹ Nine incident records involved its misuse or threatened misuse; among the 44 incidents not reported to police, 16 recorded fear of arrest under section 377 or another law, 21 lack of trust and 19 fear of police harassment. Reasons could co-occur. Eleven records named Bangladesh Police as a state actor. Within the 31 records involving women or gender-diverse categories, police blamed the victim in seven, failed to investigate in seven and returned survivors to family or other perpetrators in four. ⁶

3.2 Family coercion, forced marriage and relationship recognition (articles 5 and 16)

The 2026 data contain six lesbian-coded incident records affecting 18 direct victims. All six recorded degrading treatment, public humiliation, fear/anxiety, stress and social withdrawal; five recorded forced separation from a partner, three family confinement, two threatened forced marriage and one forced marriage. Four identified an immediate risk of forced marriage or self-harm; two recorded self-harm and one a suicide attempt. One de-identified case concerned two women pressured to separate, after which one ingested poison and required hospital care. Other cases involved police returning women to families or securing undertakings to end relationships.

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Supplementary community information describes asexual women subjected to public shaming and forced marriage, and lesbian and asexual women exposed to non-consensual sex within forced marriages. It also reports trans women relying on affidavits or informal religious arrangements because registrars cannot process their marriages consistently; these mechanisms do not reliably secure inheritance, maintenance, divorce or other spousal rights. These qualitative matters were not separately coded in the attached datasets and should be supported from confidential case files if requested. ¹⁰

The 2026 dataset itself records a Hijra/third-gender person who entered a symbolic religious union because no legal pathway was available and later experienced intimate-partner exploitation and family violence. It also records a transgender woman's Hindu ceremony followed by an online campaign denying her gender, alleging document fraud, demanding medical proof and contributing to her abrupt departure from Bangladesh. ⁶ The State report provides no information that the Committee's 2016 recommendation to criminalize marital rape irrespective of age has been implemented. ⁷

3.3 Education and employment (articles 10 and 11)

The 2024 report documents restrictions imposed by private employers on transgender staff, including limits on social media and public visibility, workplace isolation, bullying, prolonged paid leave and contract termination. ⁴ The 2026 dataset records 10 education-related incidents overall: eight involved public shaming, eight student bullying, six anti-LGBTIQ+ campus campaigns, four suspension, three SOGIESC-based disciplinary action and two forced transfer. A de-identified transgender/gender-diverse student was expelled from a student political body, taken to a police station and pressured to promise not to dress as a woman or create gender-related content, causing withdrawal from public expression and loss of income. ⁶ Community reporting also indicates exclusion and expulsion of trans and gender-diverse women from educational and affiliated student structures. ¹⁰

Within 12 transgender woman incident records in 2026, four recorded livelihood exclusion and one denial of a job because of identity or expression. Within the wider women/gender-diverse subset, 14 records concerned harassment during Hijra livelihood activity and seven livelihood exclusion; several also recorded control of earnings or denial of independent livelihood by Hijra group structures. ⁶ Protection must cover private employers and educational institutions without forcing non-Hijra trans women into Hijra livelihood systems.

3.4 Gender-based violence, health and psychosocial harm (articles 2, 5 and 12)

Among the 31 women/gender-diverse incident records in 2026, 26 recorded cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment, 24 public humiliation, 20 threats of physical violence, 17 physical assault, eight sexual harassment, three sexual assault and one rape. Twenty-six recorded stress, 25 fear/anxiety, 16 social withdrawal, 10 trauma symptoms, six depression, three self-harm and two suicide attempts. ⁶ One case concerned a transgender woman who reportedly died by suicide after family rejection, neighbourhood abuse and employment exclusion; another described a trans woman beaten and forcibly stripped by security personnel.

In 2025, local community members were implicated in 48.8 per cent of documented incidents, law-enforcement agencies in 34.1 per cent and local government authorities in 17.1 per cent; perpetrator categories could overlap. ⁵ These patterns engage the State's due-diligence duty to prevent, investigate, punish and remedy violence by both State and private actors. General recommendation No. 35 recognizes that gender-based violence affects women differently where sexual orientation, gender identity and sex characteristics intersect with other status. ⁸

3.5 Social protection and data (articles 2 and 13)

The State party's statement that social-protection programmes support Hijra people is not accompanied by eligibility rules, uptake, expenditure, geographic reach or outcomes, and it does not show access for non-Hijra transgender, non-binary or other gender-diverse women. ¹ Monitor data indicate that formal recognition has not translated into protection at scale. The 2026 women/gender-diverse subset records livelihood harassment in 14 incidents, denial of independent livelihood by a Hijra leader in four and control by a Hijra group in four. ⁶ Data systems that offer only male, female and Hijra categories reproduce invisibility and cannot measure intersectional outcomes.

4. Suggested questions for the List of Issues

1. **Reservations and equality law.** Provide a fixed timetable to withdraw the reservations to articles 2 and 16 (1) (c), and the status, text and enactment timetable of a comprehensive anti-discrimination law explicitly covering sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, and sex characteristics, with accessible remedies for discrimination by public and private actors.
2. **Autonomous legal gender recognition.** Explain how transgender, non-binary and gender-diverse people who do not belong to Hijra culture can obtain and change birth, national identity, voter, passport, education and other records through a prompt, consistent, confidential and self-determined procedure without medical, surgical, psychiatric or Hijra-membership requirements, while retaining Hijra as an available cultural identity.

3. **Criminalization and policing.** Provide data on arrests, detention, threats and complaints involving women and gender-diverse persons under section 377 or morality-related provisions, and state whether Bangladesh will repeal section 377 and prohibit its direct or indirect use to threaten, out, extort or deny protection to LGBTIQ+ people.
4. **Family violence and harmful practices.** Identify measures to prevent, investigate and remedy forced marriage, forced separation, confinement, conversion practices, public shaming, forced outing and self-harm risk affecting lesbian, bisexual, asexual, transgender and gender-diverse women; ensure confidential shelters, legal aid, psychosocial care and risk assessment before any survivor is returned to family members.
5. **Sexual violence and marital rape.** Report whether marital rape has been criminalized irrespective of the survivor's age, gender identity, sexual orientation or sex characteristics, and provide disaggregated data on complaints, investigations, prosecutions, remedies and survivor services for sexual and gender-based violence against LGBTIQ+ women.
6. **Marriage and family relations.** Explain how transgender women can register marriages in accordance with their self-identified gender and secure inheritance, maintenance, divorce, guardianship and spousal rights, and what steps will protect lesbian and other gender-diverse couples from coerced separation while ending reliance on legally uncertain affidavits or informal arrangements.
7. **Education and employment.** Provide the number and outcome of complaints concerning SOGIESC-based expulsion, suspension, forced transfer, outing, bullying and workplace dismissal; adopt binding non-discrimination duties, confidential complaints, sanctions and reinstatement remedies for public and private educational institutions and employers.
8. **Health and psychosocial support.** Describe measures to ensure confidential, non-discriminatory physical, sexual, reproductive and mental-health services for LGBTIQ+ women, to prohibit conversion practices and forced psychiatric treatment, and to establish community-led suicide-prevention and crisis-referral pathways.
9. **Social protection, data and participation.** Provide disaggregated budgets, eligibility, beneficiary numbers, complaints and outcomes for Hijra and other transgender or gender-diverse people; revise data systems to permit voluntary, confidential and self-described identity categories; and ensure meaningful participation of independent LGBTIQ+ women's organizations in policy design, implementation and monitoring.

5. Conclusion

Bangladesh's recognition of Hijra people and first census inclusion are limited steps, not evidence of substantive equality for all LGBTIQ+ women. The State report does not confront the legal invisibility of non-Hijra trans and non-binary people, forced family control of lesbian and asexual women, insecure relationship recognition, exclusion from education and livelihoods, or barriers to

police protection. The Committee should require measurable, time-bound reforms and disaggregated results consistent with articles 1, 2, 5, 10-13, 15 and 16 of the Convention.

Source notes

1. Government of Bangladesh, Combined ninth and tenth periodic reports, CEDAW/C/BGD/9-10 (2025), especially paras. 11, 34-39, 152, 159-160 and 163.
2. Inclusive Bangladesh and Prantoz Foundation, Joint UPR Submission on Gender Identity in Bangladesh, 44th UPR session (2023).
3. CEDAW, General recommendation No. 28, CEDAW/C/GC/28 (2010), especially para. 18. [Official source](#)
4. Inclusive Bangladesh, Annual Report 2024 on Human Rights Violations against LGBTIQ+ People in Bangladesh (Feb. 2025).
5. Inclusive Bangladesh, Annual Report 2025 on Human Rights Violations against LGBTIQ+ People in Bangladesh (Feb. 2026).
6. Inclusive Bangladesh, Monitor: Community-led Human Rights Violations of LGBTIQ+ People in Bangladesh, 51 incident records dated 5 Jan.-6 Aug. 2026 (anonymized dataset, on file).
7. CEDAW, Concluding observations on the eighth periodic report of Bangladesh, CEDAW/C/BGD/CO/8 (2016), paras. 8-19. [Official source](#)
8. CEDAW, General recommendation No. 35 on gender-based violence against women, CEDAW/C/GC/35 (2017). [Official source](#)
9. Bangladesh, Penal Code 1860, s. 377, official Laws of Bangladesh database. [Official source](#)
10. Inclusive Bangladesh, supplementary qualitative community information provided for this submission (Aug. 2026); underlying confidential records should be retained on file.