



General Assembly

Distr.: General
13 February 2019

English only

Human Rights Council

Fortieth session

25 February–22 March 2019

Agenda item 6

Universal Periodic Review

Written statement* submitted by Beijing Children's Legal Aid and Research Center, a non-governmental organization in special consultative status

The Secretary-General has received the following written statement which is circulated in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

[1 February 2019]

* Issued as received, in the language(s) of submission only.



Enabling Access to Justice for Minors in China

From a NGO perspective

Beijing Children’s Legal Aid and Research Center (hereafter refers to as “BCLARC”) was established in 1999 and received the special consultative status with the UN Economic and Social Council in 2011. Its vision is to build a Just Society for children where their rights could be respected and protected.

As the world’s largest developing country, China has got the greatest population of children in the world. According to the statistics releases by the Ministry of Civil Affairs, there are 6.97million left-behind children in China. Children in China face different forms of violence and it is quite prevalent that the rights of children are violated. As a child legal protection organization, BCLARC has been committed to the legal protection of children and has been promoting and providing high quality legal services and advocacy for children. In order to make it much easier for children to access justice, BCLARC has adopted a wholistic system of approaches and has established its own model of child rights advocacy, which includes:

Providing Legal Consultation and Legal Aid Service for the Children

BCLARC provides free legal consultations on child-related cases through hotlines and online portals and set up a full-time child protection lawyers team to provide legal representations for children in poverty and children whose rights have been infringed upon.

By the end of 2017, BCLARC has provided free legal consultations for more than **50,000** individuals and has provided legal aid in around **500** cases involving issues such as abuse or neglect, sexual abuse, child sexual exploitation, juvenile offenders, child labor, child victims etc.

Conducting Empirical Research on Child Rights

Through legal consultations and legal aid cases, BCLARC continues to gain experience in child protection practice and obtains invaluable insight on societal issues relevant to child protection. It actively carries out jurisprudential studies on juveniles and advocates for improvement in relevant laws and policies.

For years, BCLARC has carried out thematic child-related researches on Hukou registration, health care, street children, school violence, special protections for girls, sexual abuse, domestic violence, rehabilitation education, juvenile justice systems, social protection and legislation. BCLARC also studies on legislations and policies as entrusted by government agencies.

Up to now, BCLARC has successively published hundreds of papers, research reports, and more than 50 books including Juvenile Jurisprudence, Practical Law Series for Primary and Secondary School, Research on China Juvenile Protection Mechanism, Children Rights in Practices.

Promoting the Improvements of Laws and Policies

Believing that, one legal aid case could have the possibility of changing the life of one particular child, while the improvement of legislation has the power of changing the wellbeing of children in a larger scale, BCLARC also made a lot of efforts in child legislative and policy advocacy. Some of the suggestions BCLARC proposed in its research have been properly adopted by the legislative bodies and policy makers. In particular, BCLARC has participated in the drafting and amending process of laws, regulations and policies such as Law on Protection of Minors, Anti-Domestic Violence Law, Opinions on Sexual Assault Against Minors, Opinions on Legally Handling Several Issues on

Guardian's Infringement upon the Rights and Interests of Minors etc. with many of its opinions and suggestions being adopted.

Child Protection Advocacy and Awareness Raising

BCLARC attaches immense importance to legal education and advocacy and has implemented a variety of actions and programs thereof. This means BCLARC's work on child protection extends to early prevention. Accordingly, the lawyers from BCLARC go into schools, communities, etc. to provide legal dissemination lectures for minors as well as parents, teachers, policemen, procurators, judges, lawyers and governmental officials. By the end of 2018, BCLARC had already delivered more than 400 informational lectures with over 100,000 attendees.

Coordinating the Pro bono Lawyers' Network on Child Protection

Proposed by and with the help of BCLARC, all China lawyers' association established the Special Committee on Child Protection in 2003, whose secretary office was set in BCLARC. Through active cooperation with All China Lawyers Association, BCLARC has promoted the establishment of "Chinese Network of Children's Legal Aid Lawyers". By the end of December 2017, the network included up to 8,900 pro bono lawyers covering 31 provinces, autonomous regions and municipalities.

Providing Financial Support for Child Victims

Under the existing legislations, it is very hard for victims of crimes to claim for mental damage compensation, BCLARC financially supports children whose rights have been infringed and cannot get any compensation from the offenders of abusers.

Such funding could be used on education and professional trainings, necessary medical cares and psychological rehabilitation and has raised hope for plight children whose rights have been infringed in judicial proceedings.

In 2017, the Zhongzhi Child Caring Foundation was established to better support the children.

Up to now, BCLARC has financially assisted more than 1,260 children whose rights have been infringed upon in cases like child labor, industrial injury, traffic accident, domestic violence, school bullying, criminal offenses and sexual abuse cases.

The purpose of the funding is to help children and the family get through the urgent difficulties and most importantly to help the feel the warmth and caring of the society and regain hope for life.

Empowerment of Left Behind Children

Countryside Kindergarten Development Plan (CKDP) launched in 2014 aims to enlarge the knowledge of preschool teachers and improve the present education situations in rural areas through free, high-quality trainings and financial support.

It has established "Left-Behind Children Loving House" in countryside preschools for the left-behind children as so to provide alternative care for left-behind children lacking family care.

By the end of August 2016, CKDP has carried out 8 free trainings for more than 360 preschool teachers from over 20 provinces, autonomous regions and municipalities. More than 50,000 left-behind children benefit from this project.

Connecting Local to Global

Starting as a local NGO in China, BCLARC is active in international cooperation and exchanges and has established strong collaborative relationships with many international and regional organizations including UNICEF, Save the Children, Australian Human Rights Commission, etc.

BCLARC has started making efforts of creating platforms for peer learning and resources sharing with the aim of addressing the common challenges faced by child rights NGOs worldwide.

In June 2017, representatives of BCLARC joined the 35th general assembly of the United Nations human rights council and hosted two side events on child violence and child sexual abuse. And in March 2018, BCLARC has hosted the A20 global social leadership summit on child advocacy together with Alibaba Group.

By providing legal aid for children, carrying out practical research projects, engaging in public advocacy, encouraging lawyers and other professionals participating in child protection and by advocating law and policy reforms, BCLARC pursues a strong, comprehensive approach to the development of child rights undertakings in China.
