

# Children are our future

**Protecting children is essential in  
protecting survival of humanity**





# Children in Iran

**Statistics are devastating, change is an inevitable necessity**



## According to United Nations' Charters:

Article 27 - 1: States Parties recognize the right of every child to a standard of living adequate for the child's physical, mental, spiritual, moral and social development.

Article 28-1: States Parties recognize the right of the child to education,

Article 32 -1: States Parties recognize the right of the child to be protected from economic exploitation and from performing any work that is likely to be hazardous or to interfere with the child's education, or to be harmful to the child's health or physical, mental, spiritual, moral or social development.

Article 34: States Parties undertake to protect the child from all forms of sexual exploitation and sexual abuse.

Article 37 (a): No child shall be subjected to torture or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment. Neither capital punishment nor life imprisonment without possibility of release shall be imposed for offences committed by persons below eighteen years of age.

## In Iran:

millions of children are deprived from school

Hundreds of thousands children are breadwinners for their families

The number of child labourers is estimated to be 3 to 7 millions.

90% of street children are sexually abused and many are drug Addicts.

Half a million children are forced married some as young as 8

Thousands of children suffer psychological torture by having their parents unlawfully detained or executed for their activism



**Nasrin: “I am scared as I am being forced into a nightmare”.**

**Nasrin’s letter to her sister after running away from home: “My school friend, Hoda, was wed against her will when she was 13. I will never forget what she went through. She took her life because she could not cope. I am scared as I am being forced into a nightmare.”**

## **More than half a million children, some as young as eight, get married every year in Iran**

Most of these children are girls who marry much older men, sometimes men who are already married and have children their age.

For these girls, marriage means an end to their education, pregnancy in early teens and often divorce before the age of 18. Many come from very poor families whose parents cannot afford to feed them.

Some child brides are born to addicts, who trade them for money or drugs.

Twelve-year-old Sara was supposed to start the eighth grade last September, but her husband did not allow her to continue her education.

In Sara’s classroom, 21 out of 25 girls got married and quit school

**We can and we must stop such abuse of children. Help us to be their voice.**



## Children in oil-rich Iran search in garbage for food

**The most disturbing scene in Iran is watching young boys and girls searching in garbage for food for themselves and their families**

I am Attena when my mother was healthy she used to work but she fell down and brook her leg. I came to work instead of her. I wish my mother gets well soon. It is very difficult for me.

I am Nasser and in school holidays. I work to get money for my study. I don't want to be searching in garbage for food and plastic to sell, all my life. I feel very ashamed to say that I am searching in garbage. I tell my friends I have to go somewhere to work. Nobody must see me. I wish I could sleep at nights. Because of hard work I have a lot of pain and I can't sleep.

This is Sara ,my little sister is Leila. We would you like to go to school. Leila feels like crying and Sarah says: yes I too love to go to school like our neighbour's daughter, but my father is a prisoner and my mother is ill, what can I do. Today we didn't have any food I am looking to find food for my mother and my sister. I am not tall enough and my sister is helping me to reach.

**We can and we must stop children to be left in such circumstances. Help us to be the voice of activists who are jailed for raising their voices against such abuses.**





## Children who carry heavy loads in difficult weather



**We can and we must help children like Ali and Arian and protect their rights.**

Watching the lifeless body of Farhad, 14, with clinched fists that highlighted his last efforts to rescue himself from the ill fate was so disturbing and painful that no word could be found to comfort his grief riddled father. The story of Farhad and his 16 year old Brother Azad, who also died on that odious day, is the sad and bitter story of countless children in Iran's Kurdistan who have been working since the age of 6 to help their families earn subsistence.

It was the first time he was going to carry a load. He was 13. He could not lift the heavy load. I helped him with it and all the way I was watching him. It took me 3 extra hours on road to help this child deliver his load. He was so small and I felt sorry for him.

I asked him his name. "Ali", he said. Are you going to school? I asked. "No", he replied.

Why are you carrying heavy loads? I asked. "To earn a living", he replied and pointed to the heavy load on his shoulder. Life, school and work is summed up for Ali in this wrapped heavy load.

The other one is Arian, 14 years old. He has pulled his black knitted hat down to his eyebrow. It's time to have a rest. This is how these porters rest, with the load on their back they find a corner to sit for a moment and take a breath. While rubbing his hands to warm up he tries to pull his neck muscles for comfort but the heavy load does not permit much movement. He has put a bottle of water in the cut on the side of the sack as if it is a bottle mount in the side of his backpack. But in this mountain full of snow no one has come for leisure nor there is time to think about such thoughts.

What grade are you? I ask. "9th", he replies. Didn't you have to be at school now?

Long pause gives me the answer. **He wished to be at school.**



## Children with no place to go, are forced to be with their mothers in prisons and suffer with them



I don't know what to do. On the one hand I want to have my loved one on my side but on the other hand I hate to see her in this filthy place wasting her precious life.

Since she was borne, my daughter has not seen anything but the women's ward of prison. She is not like her fellows at the same age. She has not even seen a park or green space. Her world is the walls of this prison and the prison bars.

Words from Zahra, a prisoner of conscience who has another 5 years to spend in prison.

Sahel is the daughter of Abdolreza Ghanbari, a teacher who has been imprisoned for writing poems about freedom.

Dear Daddy, I hope you are well. Today is another day that you are not on my side. When I miss you I write to you and look at the blue watch that you gave me for my birthday to see how fast time passes and you are not on my side. Each passing day I grow older and taller.



Today is Fathers' Day. We celebrated and bought you presents. It is nearly 6 months that you are not with us and we put a picture of you on the table to talk to. I hope kind angels will bring you my message ... I have only one dream, that you came and be with me for ever. Love you, Sahel

**FREE MY FATHER - I am waiting for you, dad**





# Help us make children's wishes come true



## How these goals are achieved?

Breaking the wall of censorship of the Iranian regime with the help of volunteers who risk their lives collecting and spreading the information about the situation of children with the hope of ending such cruelties.

We echo the voice of the children who have no other means to justice and their cries are not heard. We endeavour to be and reverberate their voice.

Collecting news, information and documents about the situation of children in Iran for putting pressure on and make the regime accountable via the UN and international human rights organisations about acting and living up to their stated missions and responsibilities vis-a-vis international conventions about children and their rights.

Collecting and disseminating information about the hidden facts regarding child labourers in the midst of censorship imposed by Iranian regime and publicising this information for public opinion.



## **Please make a donation**

**to bring smile to their faces and hope to their hearts**

**Together we can prevent  
shattering talents and  
instead develop those talents  
for a better future**

**Help us make their wishes  
come true.**

