

# Major achievements of the Bangladesh Skills for Employment and Productivity (B-SEP) project





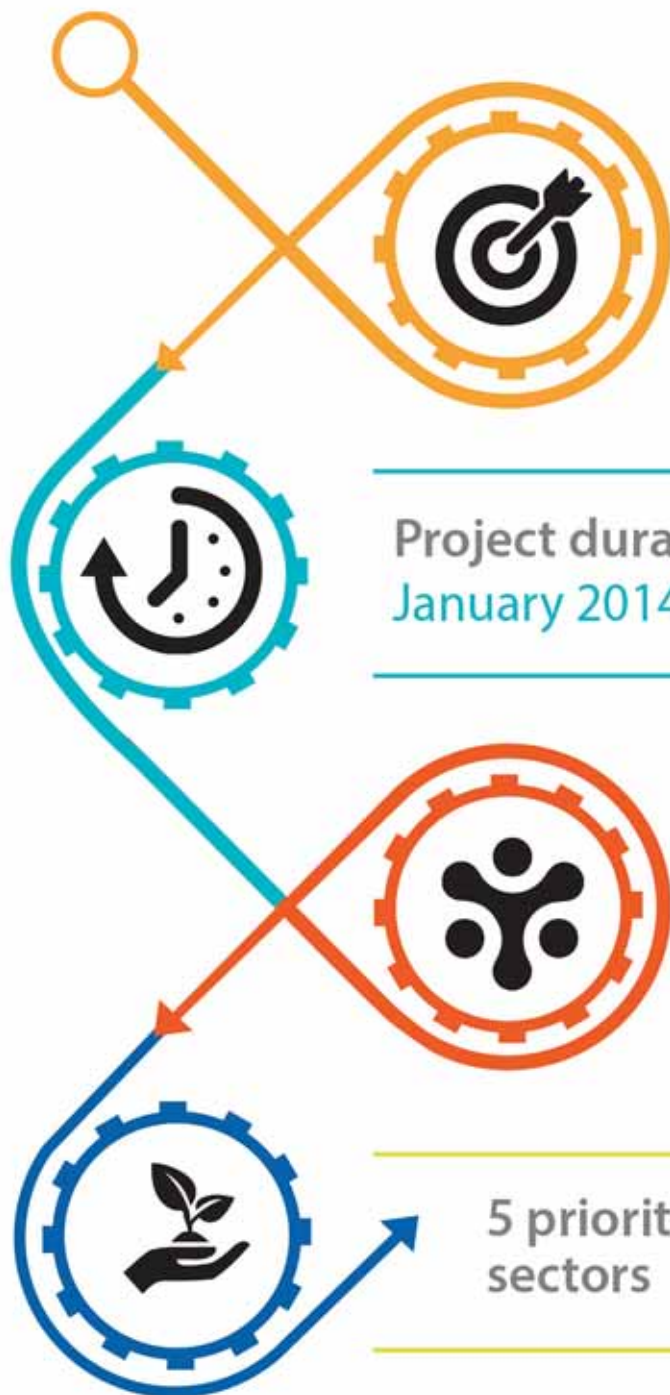
## Building an inclusive and effective skills system for Bangladesh

Every year almost two million young people enter the Bangladesh workforce. There is an urgent need to provide opportunities for skills training that matches the growing needs of industry. The Bangladesh Skills for Employment and Productivity (B-SEP) project is a skills project implemented by the International Labour Organization and funded by the Government of Canada with the support of the Government of Bangladesh. B-SEP project is supporting Government efforts to strengthen and deepen skills reform in Bangladesh for improved productivity and economic growth. B-SEP project addresses the challenges facing the Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) sector by developing institutional capacity of the skills system as well as building industries capacity for improved productivity. In addition, B-SEP project

creates linkages between institutions and industries, matching supply and demand for skilled workers as well as promoting social inclusion.

Through its actions B-SEP project contributes to the creation of a stronger skills system that provides better employment opportunities for young men and women while meeting the needs of industry. This in turn contributes to the attainment of Decent Work, sustainable economic development, poverty reduction and social inclusion in Bangladesh. This publication captures the key achievements of the B-SEP project to date as it works to create a stronger foundation upon which Bangladesh can build the skilled workforce it needs for the future.

# B-SEP project snapshot



## Objective

To assist the Government of Bangladesh to implement TVET reforms to secure a better trained, qualified and competent workforce with increased economic opportunities

## Project duration

January 2014 to December 2018

## Implementing Partners

Directorate of Technical Education (DTE), National Skills Development Council (NSDC), Bangladesh Technical Education Board (BTEB) and Bureau of Manpower, Employment and Training (BMET)

## 5 priority sectors

Agro-food  
Tourism & Hospitality  
Pharmaceuticals  
Ceramics  
Furniture



## The project works in four key areas



**Increase skills funding, improve planning and establish Employment Support Services** – The B-SEP project supports national skills policy implementation by introducing mechanisms for skills planning, funding and management systems.



**Competency Based Training and Assessment, Quality and Relevance** - This area focuses on competency based training and assessment to improve the quality and market relevance of technical and vocational education and training. Support is provided to key government agencies e.g. Directorate of Technical Education, Bangladesh Technical Education Board, for the implementation and regulation of new courses as per the National Technical and Vocational Qualification Framework (NTVQF).



**Industry Skills Development** – The project is supporting (a) industries capacity to improve productivity (b) industry-led apprenticeships to improve workplace performance and (c) increased demand for and utilization of skills in specific sectors. This includes the expansion of apprenticeship systems in both the formal and informal sectors and Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL).



**Improved Access to Skills** - The project is building capacity of skills institutions to make skills accessible to disadvantaged groups such as poor women, persons with disabilities, indigenous youth etc. It also promotes skilling disadvantaged women in non-traditional occupations.

# Major achievements of the B-SEP project



## Directorate of Technical Education to allocate budget to run NTVQF courses in its institutions

The National Technical and Vocational Qualifications Framework (NTVQF) supports skills development pathways that provide access to qualifications and assist the transition from training to work. Following advocacy by B-SEP project on the merits of NTVQF the Directorate of Technical Education (DTE) has agreed to run and fund competency-based national qualifications courses and assessments in its TVET institutes. This commitment is important as it will help strengthen the NTVQF system.



## Five Public Private Partnerships piloted in TVET institutes

B-SEP project established five public-private partnerships (PPP) between DTE's TVET institutes in Dhaka, Barisal, Narayanganj, Panchagarh and Rangpur and private industries. The PPPs show the pathways for private investments in skills development. It has also opened opportunities for students to gain hands on experience and technical skills in an industrial environment which prepares them to find jobs upon completion of training. Based on the success and lessons from these pilots, efforts are underway to roll out the PPP model to more TVET institutes.



## Eight Employment Support Service units piloted

B-SEP project piloted Employment Support Service (ESS) units in eight TVET institutions, which work closely with Industry Skills Councils to create links with various companies for job placement. Institutes participating in the pilot are: Bangladesh Institute of Glass and Ceramics (BIGC), Rajshahi Mohila Polytechnic Institute, Panchagarh TSC, Rajbari TSC, Nilphamari TSC, Barisal TSC, UCEP Bangladesh and BKTTTC. More than 6,000 students used the employment support service in eight pilot institutes. Job fairs have helped forge links with industry while providing opportunities for students to transfer their new skills to the workplace.



## 20 competency standards developed in five sectors

B-SEP project helped Bangladesh Technical Education Board (BTEB) to develop competency standards for 20 occupations including machine operation, industrial machine maintenance, lacquer polishing, housekeeping, tour guide and ceramic decoration. The competency standards have been developed in close





collaboration with the private sector to ensure that industry needs are met. This helps bridge the gap between the provision of TVET education and the skills needed in various sectors.



**Apprenticeships in formal and informal sectors strengthened** – With the support of B-SEP project the number of formal apprenticeships has increased from less than 100 in 2007 to over 12,000 by the end of 2017. Formal apprenticeship programmes are employer-led, demand driven and practical. They also greatly benefit employers and trainees alike.

Disadvantaged youth often lack the resources to enter into the skills system. B-SEP project is supporting local government to implement informal apprenticeship training programmes in 55 upazilas (sub-districts). The informal apprenticeship model has great potential in Bangladesh to help disadvantaged youth gain the skills that will help them find better paying jobs.



**Five Industry Skills Councils established and strengthened** – Industry Skills Councils (ISCs) bring together industries, workers and government representatives to provide advice on sector-specific skills priorities. In doing so, they are a key institutional mechanism to help bridge the gap between the industries and TVET institutions. B-SEP project has worked closely with and strengthened the Agro-food processing and Leather ISCs and helped establish Industry Skills Councils for the Ceramic, Furniture and Pharmaceutical sectors. Many member industries of these ISCs are taking the lead in implementing apprenticeship programmes in the formal sector.



**National capacity to strengthen Recognition of Prior Learning developed** – Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) provides an opportunity for workers to have skills gained through informal training or on the job experience assessed and formally acknowledged. B-SEP project has developed an RPL operational guideline which the Bangladesh Technical Education Board is implementing. To date, some 1,200 workers have been certified through the RPL process by registered training organizations.





**Enrolment of students with disabilities in TVET institutes increased** – With support from B-SEP project the Directorate of Technical Education (DTE), Ministry of Education, has carried out a number of steps to make its 118 TVET institutes disability inclusive in line with the provisions of the National Skills Development Policy (NSDP) 2011. These steps include (a) mainstreaming disability in their annual plan, budget, monitoring system and annual appraisals of TVET institute principals, (b) developing guidelines for disability inclusion and training vice principals and senior instructors on disability inclusion. As a result of measures taken to enhance disability inclusion, enrolment of students with disabilities at DTE's TVET institutes rose to 357 in the academic session 2015-16, significantly higher than the 56 students enrolled in 2014-2015 prior to DTE initiating these measures with ILO support.



**Bangladesh Business and Disability Network (BBDN) launched** – Launched by Honorable Prime Minister of Bangladesh in December 2016, the Bangladesh Business and Disability Network (BBDN) promotes disability inclusion in the workplace and provides support to businesses, which are willing to make their workplaces disability inclusive. A job fair organized by BBDN in December 2017 helped 150 persons with

disabilities to get jobs in many reputed industries throughout.



**950 women skilled in 12 non-traditional occupations** – B-SEP has supported six government and private TVET institutes to train 950 women in non-traditional occupations such as housekeeping, electrical installation, lacquer polishing, refrigeration air-conditioning, cooking, food processing and quality control. Ninety percent of these women got jobs in formal sector industries within three months of graduating from the skills training.



**400 green entrepreneurs supported to create green jobs** – B-SEP project is promoting green enterprises for self-employment of disadvantaged groups such as women and men with disabilities as well as poor women and men through skills and enterprise training. The areas of green jobs include mushroom production and marketing by cooperatives of persons, mainly women, with disabilities; waste management and recycling; safe food production and marketing; eco-tourism and crab fattening. It is also developing competency standards of these occupations, which have successfully supported the livelihoods of the disadvantaged groups.



“Before the **ESTABLISHMENT OF AN EMPLOYMENT SUPPORT SERVICE CELL**

30-40% of Diploma students remained unemployed. However, after the cell was established all students have found jobs.”

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**Ali Azam Khan Mojahidi**  
Junior Instructor (Tech)  
Bangladesh Institute of Glass and Ceramic (BIGC)

“I never thought I would have to work for my family to survive. Tony Khan Institute's **COMPETENCY BASED TRAINING CHANGED MY LIFE.**

Now I am an employee of Amari and have an ambition to be a Team Leader.”

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**Rabeya Akhter Shoma**  
Team Member Housekeeping  
Amari International Hotel Dhaka

“Despite **BEING A PHYSICALLY CHALLENGED PERSON, MUSHROOM CULTIVATION MADE ME AN ENTREPRENEUR.** Now I can

earn more and I can send my children to school. I am no longer dependent on my husband and so he treats me differently, with more respect. This can be replicated easily to empower those with disabilities to earn from home.”

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**Kajal Akhter**  
Women entrepreneur, Shahadpur, Savar

“The Pharmaceuticals Industry Skills Council organized an apprenticeship program for 600 workers and 35 supervisors. This was useful to them as well as for the industry. **THE WORKERS BECAME SKILLED AND THE COMPANY'S PRODUCTIVITY INCREASED.** This is good for both the workers and the industry.”

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**M. Mosaddek Hossain**  
Managing Director, Unimed & Unihealth  
Manufacturing Ltd.

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