

Investing in Young People in Bangladesh

Title	Investing in Young People in Bangladesh
Coverage	Bangladesh
Organization/enterprise	Hennes & Mauritz (H&M)
Topic	Vocational training
Target group and outreach	Disadvantaged young people from the slum areas
Purpose	The main objective is to train disadvantaged youth (aged 17 and older) from the slum areas to find jobs as skilled workers when they have reached the legal working age of 18 years. The clothing industry is the biggest and most important industry in Bangladesh but it has faced problems of child labour in the past. Through this initiative, young men and women are offered vocational education with a guarantee of job placement; something that they could otherwise not hope to get.
Key features	<p>(1) Recognizes that the reintegration of child labourers in the vocational education system requires a combination of services, programmes, institutions and stakeholders</p> <p>(2) Offers guaranteed employment after successful completion of training</p> <p>(3) Has a prominent focus on young women</p>
Strategy and approach	<p>This initiative was founded in the wake of a Memorandum of Understanding between UNICEF, ILO and the Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA) on collaboration to assist former child labourers in the garment sector in Bangladesh. H&M, as part of its Corporate Social Responsibility activities, arranged sewing skills education and training for former child labourers who have completed three years of schooling through the Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee (BRAC) or Gono Shahajjo Sangstha (GSS).</p> <p>Since 1999, H&M has been running a training centre aimed at improving the future for young people in Bangladesh by helping them to acquire jobs in garment factories. Salaries of trainees are paid by H&M and after finishing their vocational training at the training centre, students are guaranteed work as sewing machinists at one of H&M's suppliers. In the capital city Dhaka, approximately 100 young people each year receive vocational training and placement through the programme.</p>
Partners	<p>H&M and several local suppliers:</p> <p>The sewing machines as well as fabrics and other materials used at the training centre are donated by a number of suppliers who see it as an interesting and important project. The majority of the costs of the project are met by H&M.</p>
Major achievements	<p>The textile sector is of great importance for economic and social development in Bangladesh and represents over 70 per cent of the country's total exports. H&M today represents a substantial proportion of the total textile exports from Bangladesh.</p> <p>By the end of 2004, around 550 young people had been trained in the training centre (out of which 80 per cent were girls).</p> <p>The project was originally intended to run only for two years, but has proved so successful that H&M has decided to continue it.</p>

Additional information	
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Internet link	http://www.hm.com/csr and more specifically: http://www.hm.com/us/corporateresponsibility/wesupport/projectsandcooperation/investinginyoungpeopleinbangladesh_projectsarticle4.nhtml

Source: Hennes & Mauritz