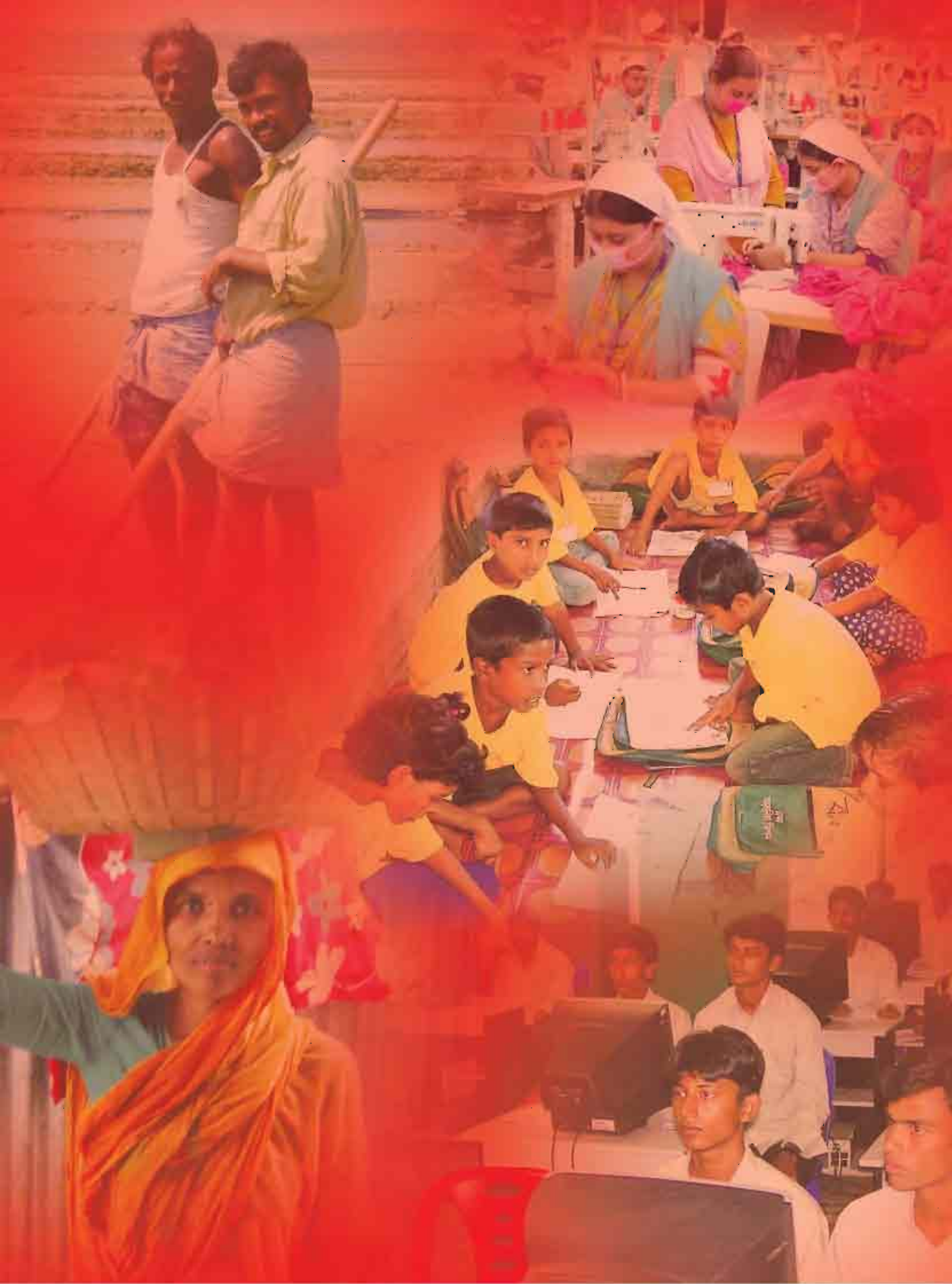




36 years in Bangladesh







36 years in Bangladesh



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Foreword

This year, ILO marks 90 years of working for social justice worldwide and 36 years in Bangladesh. The Organization's unique tripartite structure to work with the government, employers and workers makes it more relevant today than before because "work" is one of the few experiences common to us all. And this is the foundation on which economies are built. 'Decent work', which is the stated goal of ILO, sums up the aspirations of people to have productive work, fair income, security at work, social protection, equality at work and freedom of expression.

This information booklet is about ILO and its constituents during the last 36 years in Bangladesh. On one hand, it reflects the experiences, good practices and stories of our cooperation; on the other, it touches upon the views, concerns and aspirations of our constituents and what future ILO holds for this country. Moreover, it identifies strategies and possible interventions and the need to work together, hand in hand, to improve the lives of working people in Bangladesh.

The Bangladesh Decent Work Country Programme, which is the framework for ILO cooperation at the country level, focuses on the implementation of ILO Conventions, skills training, employment policy and promotion of green jobs, combating child labour, empowerment of women, occupational safety and health at work, and labour migration. Most importantly, this booklet presents our partners' perspective on the effects of the current global crisis on Bangladesh and how ILO can respond through its decent work agenda.

The booklet is an exemplary effort of our 'valuable partnership' with constituents and partners and an attempt to consolidate their ideas, plans and vision for achieving the decent work goals. Decent work makes a clear linkage between employment, poverty reduction and sustainable development, and our partners have shown their commitment to it. For this, we are really thankful to them.

As you know, this is the first issue of our booklet. Therefore, we have included selective stories to start with. In future, we hope to reflect more about our partners' practical experiences.

On the occasion of the observance of ILO's 90th anniversary, the ILO Bangladesh Office looks forward to a strong partnership with its constituents to help formulate policies and programmes to respond to the future challenges faced by the country including the current financial and economic crisis.

Lastly, we thank our development partners and donor agencies for their generous support.

Message



It is my pleasure to congratulate the ILO on this prestigious occasion of its 90th Anniversary. The ILO is a long standing partner of the Government right after the Independence of Bangladesh. We sincerely thank the Organization for its support and cooperation during all these years!

This Information booklet is an attempt to present experiences and aspirations of the social partners of ILO who have played an active role along with the ILO in various areas of work in Bangladesh. No doubt, a reflection on the past achievements will help us all in developing future policies,

programmes and partnerships for social and economic growth, sustainable development and decent work.

Another aspect I wish to bring to your attention is that ILO's 90th anniversary comes at a time when the government is preparing itself to respond to the challenges of the ongoing global financial crisis. Since January this year, the country has been experiencing reduction in job opportunities in the overseas labour market and slowdown of certain export products.

To counter this and protect the poor and vulnerable groups from the impact of this crisis, the government is expanding its existing social safety net programmes. Important among these are: Public Food Distribution System (PFDS) to provide support to the poor affected by natural calamities and disaster; Rural Employment and Road maintenance programme to create jobs for ultra poor and women; 100 day employment programme to provide employment to the poor (about 20 million person days) to combat seasonal food shortages; Income support and cash grants to widows and destitute women, orphans, old persons and freedom fighters; a new scheme for the low-income working mothers; and expansion of job opportunities for the unemployed as one of the election commitments of this government.

In addition, the Government in January 2009 formed a high-powered committee to monitor global recession and work out remedies for its adverse effects on Bangladesh economy. Recently the Minister of Finance has announced a stimulus package of Tk. 3,424 crore to face impact of global recession.

Dear readers, the Government is indeed grateful to the ILO for its on-going support. The ILO has played a significant role in formulating policies and action plans for the country on employment promotion, combating child labour, promotion of occupational safety and health, skill training, training and upgrading the capacity of our constituents, and improving social dialogue.

Also, I would like to record our appreciation for the important role being played by the UN agencies towards poverty alleviation and overall socio-economic development of the country.

I wish to assure the ILO and the social partners our full support and commitment for the implementation of the Decent Work Country Programme.

I once again applaud the ILO for its successful 90 years and 36 years working for social justice in Bangladesh.

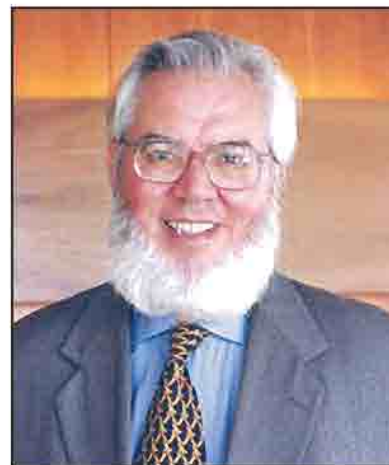
Engr. Khandker Mosharraf Hossain

Hon'ble Minister, Ministry of Labour and Employment and Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment, Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

Message



On this global celebration of ILO 90, I welcome and thank you all for joining us. The ILO was built on the basic conviction that universal and lasting peace can be established only if it is based on social justice, through war and peace, depressions and economic growth. The ILO has succeeded in bringing together the government, employers, and workers for these shared values.



Today, at a time of profound global, economic and social turbulence, the message and mandate of the ILO bring a ray of hope to the people of the world. Thus, this event is more than a celebration of our past! It is indeed a strategic opportunity to focus on the pressing priorities of people today i.e., jobs, social protection and rights at work.

The ILO's vision of social justice is guarded by basic human values. These values and actions were recognized by the awarding of the noble peace prize to the ILO in 1969 and we are proud of it!

On this 90th anniversary, these values and actions are needed more than ever to help build the new globalization, which is fair and sustainable. And for this we offer the building blocks of the decent work agenda. This includes employment creation such as green jobs through sustainable enterprises, jobs for women and men in times of crisis and recovery, solidarity in the form of social protection, upholding standards and fundamental principles on rights at work, and harnessing the creative power of dialogue and collective bargaining to find the best solutions.

Our tripartite legacy is the foundation of our future. Our agenda for the 21st century is based on timeless and universal values of people, and their fair chance for decent job. Together in partnership with our constituents, we look forward to our mission for policy choices that sustain the goal of decent work and advance the course of decent work for social justice and a fair globalization.

Mr. Juan Somavia

Director General

International Labour Organization



The 90th anniversary of the ILO is not an ordinary event. It is a very important global event with national significance. In fact, it is being celebrated at a time when the world economy is faced with unprecedented recession, marked by financial, economic and employment crisis. The ILO is one of the few international organizations that have pervasive influence on issues which can

help restore a fair and sustainable world economy through the process of globalization.

With the mandate to protect workers rights at the workplaces, the ILO has shifted its policy focus and has been playing the lead role on issues like productivity, employment creation, skill development, empowerment of women, elimination of child labour, decent work, etc. In pursuing its roles on such issues, the ILO has helped develop through out the world, traditions of tripartite co-operation - a relationship contributing to trust amongst the workers, employers and the government. The effectiveness of tripartite co-operation varied from country to country depending upon their level of social development.

Bangladesh Employers' Federation feels that the spirit of tripartism will help achieve favorable outcome of the plans and strategies which are being taken at the national level to tackle the global crisis. Obviously, the government, employers and workers have to make conscious efforts for this purpose. It should be kept in mind that tripartism becomes an effective institution and delivers its will only when the three social partners remain politically and otherwise free to interact on equal footings for the larger cause of socio-economic stability as partners and not as adversaries, with a clear understanding of the issues which constitute the core of globalization.

On the occasion of the ILO's 90th anniversary, Bangladesh Employers' Federation reiterates its pledge to work jointly with the two other social partners in framing and finalizing the policy responses which are needed by Bangladesh for tackling the global crisis.

Kamran T. Rahman

President

Bangladesh Employers' Federation

Message



I want to congratulate ILO on this auspicious occasion of their 90th anniversary. The ILO started its work in Bangladesh right after its independence, in 1973. Not only globally but also locally in Bangladesh, the ILO has made a remarkable contribution in the socio-economic development. They have played a significant role for the promotion of labour rights in Bangladesh.



The National Coordination Committee for Workers' Education (NCCWE) represents the workers' voice in the country, and ILO works for labour rights. That's why our association with ILO is very important to NCCWE and its members. The ILO's focal point for workers activities took a vital part here. They helped NCCWE in various sectors like maintaining a system for labour, developing a standard for labour, promoting opportunities for labourers, obtaining productive works in condition of freedom for labourers, training skilled labour and some of them to go work in other countries.

The NCCWE believes that the many different projects of ILO have helped NCCWE and the Government and surely will achieve numerous goals at national height. The ILO has already taken the initiative to support a number of training centers to build the capacity and train skilled labour all around the country.

On this occasion of the 90th anniversary of ILO, the NCCWE looks forward to working closely with ILO together with the Bangladesh Government to take all necessary steps for the promotion of workers rights. The NCCWE hopes that ILO will enhance the capability of our workers to train them as skilled labourers and encourage overseas employment through its decent work agenda as a vital response to the current global crisis.

Abdul Matin Master

Chairman, National Coordination Committee for Workers' Education (NCCWE)
President, Jatiya Sramik League

Message



The ILO Bangladesh Office is proud to publish this information booklet to mark the 90th anniversary of ILO and our 36 years in Bangladesh. As one of the oldest institutions in the UN system, this anniversary is a milestone of global importance and also of high significance at the national level. Bangladesh is a longstanding member of the ILO and we have been honoured to work together with you

through these 36 years to expand opportunities for decent work.

This occasion commemorates our past and charts the way for a future with decent work for all. In Bangladesh, Decent Work Country Programme envisages to work in close collaboration with its tripartite constituents and other partners to improve skills training and employability; to protect the rights of workers; to combat child labour; and to enhance the capacities of our tripartite constituents and partners.

This booklet reflects the experiences of our constituents and social partners who are working with the ILO. The primary objective is not simply to highlight their past experiences, but also to use this strategic opportunity to focus on the pressing priorities of people today.

Thus, we expect our constituents and partners to identify challenges and set out future directions at a time when we need 'partnerships' to defeat the impact of the ongoing financial and economic crisis. This will indeed assist us in achieving our decent work goals to improve the lives of people; create employment opportunities; ensure workers rights and protection, and sustain economic growth.

On this prestigious occasion of ILO 90, I express my gratitude and sincere thanks to the Government of Bangladesh, Bangladesh Employers' Federation and National Coordination Committee for Workers' Education and to our other partners (viz. private sector, civil society, research organization, academia and media) for their wholehearted support and cooperation, and for working hand in hand with the ILO for the last 36 years in Bangladesh. Also, we hereby acknowledge the generous support provided by our donor agencies to our programmes and projects.

I am confident that with your support, we will cherish this moment to begin writing our chapter to promote social justice and dignity of work for the people of Bangladesh.

Panudda Boonpala
 Country Director
 ILO Office Bangladesh

From 1973 to 2009, the ILO in Bangladesh has come a long way. The ILO Office in Bangladesh was established on 25 June, 1973, a year after Bangladesh became a member of ILO on 22 June, 1972. Bangladesh, till today, has ratified 33 ILO Conventions out of which seven are fundamental conventions. Bangladesh is also a member of the ILO Governing Body for the period 2008-2011.

Decent Work Country Programme (DWCP) has become the framework of ILO cooperation.

The ILO works with the government, employers and workers in a tripartite approach. So far, this approach has proven to be very effective, as all the stakeholders can sit together and discuss their issues and propose strategies for future development.

The Decent Work Country Programme, which was formulated through a series of consultation with ILO constituents and social partners, has four outcomes. These are improved skills training and entrepreneurship for enhanced employability and livelihoods; increased coverage of social protection and rights for workers in selected sectors; elimination of worst form of child labour; and capacity building of tripartite partners. These interrelated principles have proven to be beneficial for Bangladesh.

In implementing its programmes and projects, the ILO focuses on its Conventions on fundamental principles and rights at work and other key international labour standards. It has contributed to the



On June 25, 1973, Bangladesh and ILO signed an agreement to establish an ILO Office in Dhaka.

elimination of worst forms of child labour as a matter of priority through advocacy, non formal education, capacity building, vocational training, and the provision of viable alternatives for children, their families and employers alike.

As the ILO observes its 90th anniversary and 36 years of working partnership in Bangladesh, its constituents recommend to expand its programme more in the country. The ILO played a major role in sensitizing the government, the employers, as well as the workers on labour and employment issues.

'Green Jobs' initiative in Bangladesh is a relatively new programme. The primary objective is to create linkages between employment and environment policies and to bring them closer to sustainable development. Green jobs reduce the environmental impact of enterprises and economic sectors, ultimately to levels that are sustainable, while also meeting the standards required for

'decent work'.

The 'Green Jobs Initiative in Bangladesh' was officially launched on December 4, 2008, jointly by the Ministry of Labour and Employment and the ILO. This Initiative is being rolled out with the ILO's tripartite constituents; the Government, BEF, NCCWE, and civil society partners such as Grameen Shakti and Waste Concern.

Key areas of work include assessment of green jobs in four sectors: agriculture, renewable energy, waste management and construction; strengthening the work of the existing partner organizations, such as the training of women entrepreneurs; enhancing policies, particularly the links between those that relate to green jobs and sustaining the environment; sharing knowledge, lessons learnt and documenting results.

Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) Reform is one of the important tools to improve the employability of individuals, increase

productivity in industry and reduce poverty. Bangladesh already has an established TVET system. However, the system is hampered by inadequate links with industry and outdated curriculum, and delivery strategies. In cooperation with the Government, the ILO is implementing the TVET Reform project, funded by the European Commission (2008-2012), to reduce poverty through reforms to the technical and vocational education and training (TVET) system. These reforms will enable more people to acquire employable skills through wage-earning jobs and self-employment.

The activities for this project, the first of its nature in Bangladesh, have been carried out adopting five components dealing with TVET policy for good governance, develop a national TVET qualification framework for Bangladesh, strengthen TVET institutions, improve skills development in key growth and export-oriented industries, and to increase the access of underprivileged groups to TVET.

The key partners and beneficiaries include Ministry of Labour, Ministry of Education (MOE), Ministry of Expatriates Welfare and Overseas Employment, Directorate of Technical Education (DTE), Bangladesh Technical Education Board (BTEB), Bureau of Manpower & Employment & Training (BMET). There is also collaboration with private sector partners primarily from four sectors - IT, Leather, Transport equipments, Agro-food processing.

Through the Urban Informal Economy (UIE) project, ILO is helping Bangladesh to eliminate the Worst

Forms of Child Labour (WFCL). This is a part of a national Time Bound Programme (TBP) which was developed following the ratification of ILO Convention No. 182 on the Elimination of the WFCL by Bangladesh in 2001. The UIE project succeeded an ILO pilot project which began in 2001. The UIE project commenced in January 2007 and its current phase will be completed in December 2011. The UIE project, being implemented in Dhaka Metropolitan, is funded by the Government of Netherlands.

This project will raise knowledge on child labour in the urban informal economy. Approximately 48,000 children will be protected from hazardous work and their workplaces will be free from hazardous child labour. Approximately 26,000 relatively young children will be prepared for formal primary/secondary education. Another 10,000 relatively older children will be prepared for and placed in decent employment arrangements. About 28,000 guardians/household members, and approximately 4,000 employers will improve their social and economic security. The capacity of national and municipal stakeholders will also be increased at institutional and implementation levels.

In tripartite mechanism, the ILO works with the Government, BEF and NCCWE. The BEF is representative of the employers in Bangladesh. It is a member of the International Organization of Employers (IOE) and represents the employers in the International Labour Conference held every year in Geneva. The main objectives of BEF are to provide employers with

guidance and assistance in the field of industrial relations, provide training and skill development, safety and health, good management practices and to bring their concerted views on labour issues to the attention of the Government through representation in both the national and international arena.

The NCCWE is a united platform of 14 major national trade union federations in Bangladesh who represent the majority of the workers and employees of the country. Its members are affiliated with the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC), World Federation of Trade Union (WFTU), and International Transport Workers Federation (ITF). One of the main objectives of NCCWE is to act in a coordinated manner in its programmes with the ILO and support implementation of decent work agenda.

As the ILO observes its 90th anniversary and 36 years of working partnership in Bangladesh, its constituents recommend to expand its programme more in the country. Besides the projects and programmes mentioned above, the ILO played a major role in sensitizing the government, the employers, and workers on labour and employment issues.

The 90th anniversary provides a strategic opportunity for ILO to look forward to its tripartite constituents for more extensive partnerships in responding to the current financial and economic crisis.

Impact of Global Financial Crisis on Bangladesh

The Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD), in collaboration with ILO, is currently conducting a rapid assessment of the impact of the global financial crisis on the Bangladesh economy. The report of the assessment will be available in May 2009. Here are some key preliminary findings:

- Export growth has slowed down recently. Growth in Q2 of FY2008-09 (October-December, 2008) was negative (-) 1.2 per cent compared to the same quarter of the previous year
- During July-February of FY2008-09, remittances increased by 27.1 per cent compared to the corresponding period of last year: US\$ 865.3 mln was remitted in January, 2009, which is a new record; another US\$ 784.4 million was received in February - 13.8 per cent higher than the previous year's figures.
- Despite the increased remittance flow, during July-February of FY2008-09, number of people obtained overseas jobs declined by (-) 26.2 per cent compared to FY2007-08. In February 2009, this number was only 43,856 compared to 71,716 in February 2008 (38.8 per cent fall). Bangladesh Association of International Recruiting Agency (BAIRA) feared that workers going abroad for jobs may halve in 2009, compared to 2008.
- The figures for July-December FY2008-09 indicate a decline of (-) 8.0 per cent in the net foreign aid disbursement in Bangladesh.

Apart from the diplomatic measures, other measures to address the declining overseas employment, may include:

- in the short term, training of non-skilled labours to upgrade the workforce to semi-skilled category;
- in the medium term, training of workers for the care sector (for example, nurses) needs to be emphasized.



Since setting up of its office in Bangladesh in 1973, ILO has extended all its co-operation for the country's socio-economic sectors. Bangladesh has been implementing programmes and projects especially focused on sustainable socio-economic development with the assistance of ILO.

"Historically," says Mr. Atharul Islam, "as we know, ILO is an organization committed to social justice and freedom of association, and for the protection of the rights and welfare of workers. The ILO Conventions and Recommendations provide useful guidance for member-states, such as Bangladesh, in the formulation of national laws and policies related to protection of the rights of workers and their welfare," says Mr. Islam.

The ILO is working to promote tripartite approach i.e., cooperation between the government, employers and employees (workers). "We are being benefited from the cross-country global experience of ILO through its broad range of programmes and activities around the globe," says Mr. Islam.

Mr. Islam appreciates the contribution of ILO in Bangladesh's socio-economic development and terms it 'praiseworthy'. He thinks there are specific areas where ILO has made a difference at the country level. "Bangladesh has ratified 33 ILO Conventions of which 7 are fundamental ones. We have aligned our laws, labour laws and policies, and child labour policies keeping in view the provisions of these conventions. These not only benefit our workforce but also create an enabling environment for good governance in the industrial sector conducive to rapid economic growth including foreign investment," explains Mr. Islam.

Mr. Islam thinks that the main challenges for ILO at the country level are protection of the rights and welfare of workers including overseas workers and the informal economy workers, as they remain outside the purview of the labour laws.

Child labour has become a global concern. With ILO's assistance, Bangladesh has been engaged in

programmes aiming at withdrawal of children from hazardous occupations and providing alternatives for them and their families. Garments industry has been made child labour free with the support of ILO.

"Currently," says Mr. Islam, "ILO is supporting the implementation of decent work in Bangladesh. It has helped us to better integrate our programmes to achieve a broader national goal through interrelated interventions," he adds.

Freedom of association goes hand in hand with other principles like elimination of child labour, equal treatment and opportunities for all workers, and abolition of any kind of forced or compulsory labour. These inter-related principles and integration of various programmes and projects raise the effectiveness and efficiency of the projects.

"That is why the concept of 'decent work' has already been included in the new PRSP document and reaffirms the relevance of such a concept in Bangladesh context," explains Mr. Islam.

In his opinion, the ILO, given its global outreach for new ideas, knowledge and experience to address many social problems faced by the society, can play an important role in Bangladesh as well. He suggests some ideas and areas where ILO can assist Bangladesh:

- bringing new ideas and strategies for good governance at the workplace and raise competitiveness, image and productivity of the workplace;

- promoting sound labour and employment policies, upgrading of skills of workers for both domestic and overseas market, and enabling business environment;
- addressing the problem of displacement of workers due to financial shocks and vulnerability from overseas factors;
- protecting the rights and welfare of the vast majority of the informal economy workers; and
- removing discrimination at workplace and creating an enabling environment for participation of all groups in the labour market.

Mr. Islam thinks that the main challenges for ILO at the country level are protection of the rights and welfare of workers including overseas workers and the informal economy workers, as they remain outside the purview of the labour laws; and also tackling the issue of discrimination at workplace.

"The ILO should provide country-specific guidelines," he adds. In the present scenario, it should have sound policies and programmes to tackle the adverse impact of globalization and promote welfare of all categories of workers. "The ILO should also build national capacity to promote sound social and labour policies for sustainable development," concludes Mr. Islam.

Views of the policy makers

Syed Ataur Rahman

Secretary, Ministry of Education



The Ministry of Education in Bangladesh deals with human resources development; thus, for ILO it is one of the most important development partners. "The ILO has been immensely contributing to enhance skill development of labour through Technical and Vocational Education Training (TVET)," says Mr. Syed Ataur Rahman, Secretary,

Ministry of Education.

"ILO's contribution for modernizing TVET curriculum and introduction of market-oriented courses is helping us enhance the skills of students in generating more employment both at home and abroad," adds Mr. Rahman.

"Bangladesh is an over-populated country and there is limited scope

for employment generation inside the country," opined Mr. Rahman.

"Bangladesh needs to tap the opportunities abroad with skilled manpower and ILO can help us find the right kind of market as well as training for our workers," hopes Mr. Rahman. He thinks human resources development is considered as one of the keys to poverty eradication in Bangladesh and ILO has all the right kinds of approach to the issue.

"ILO's contribution of modernizing TVET curriculum and introduction of market-oriented courses is helping us enhance the skills of students in generating more employment both at home and abroad," adds Mr. Rahman.

Greeting the ILO on its 90th anniversary, Mr. Rahman proclaims, "I hope ILO would contribute to the overall development of our human resources and the relationship between ILO and the Ministry of Education will be stronger in future."



The Bureau of Manpower Employment and Training (BMET) had been working with ILO since 1979. The ILO started working with BMET under an International Development Agency (IDA) funded Vocational training project in which ILO was the implementing agency. "We constructed five technical training centres and also the existing building of BMET," says BMET Director Research Dr. Nurul Islam.

Dr. Islam believes that IDA Vocational Training had been one of the most exciting elements in working with ILO over the years. "Initially," he says, "it was the starting of modernization of Bangladesh's technical training system under Bureau of Manpower. We had a project in the early 1960s, and then we could spread the training system across Bangladesh when we went into partnership with ILO," says Dr. Islam.

Later on, BMET, in partnership with ILO, adopted small projects, upgrading of the existing courses, some equipment support and a few employment generation projects.

The Community-based Vocational Training was a very successful pilot project for rural women. "We would want to take up a comprehensive CBT project in future as well," says Dr. Islam.

The most significant TVET (Technical Education and Vocational Training) reform project is the one that we are currently implementing," Dr. Islam points out.

In his message on ILO's 90th anniversary, Dr. Islam hopes ILO would launch more projects in Bangladesh and come in a big way in this country so that Bangladeshi workers can establish themselves as efficient manpower across the world. "I request them to focus on another area which is rehabilitation of returnee migrants," recommends Dr. Islam.

There are five components in TVET reform project, most important being "policy reform". "We are adopting TVET policies in Bangladesh for coping with international standard, as we are currently exporting manpower to more than a hundred countries,

especially in the developed world," explains Dr. Islam.

"The TVET reform is important as the demand for skilled workers is increasing day by day and demand for unskilled labour is decreasing," explains Dr. Islam.

Keeping that in mind, BMET has already expanded the training centres in all Districts of Bangladesh and is increasing their capacity for upgrading the standard to the international level.

Dr. Islam thinks ILO can do a lot in imparting technical education in Bangladesh. "We are now trying to expand to other special areas such as care-giving, hospitality trade, hotel and tourism. The ILO has already helped in establishing National Institute for Hotel and Tourism under Parjatan Corporation," elaborates Dr. Islam.

But the facilities are insufficient in the backdrop of international demand. BMET is also looking at the local tourism market.

Dr. Islam is confident that the ILO's Government-Worker-Employer approach works very well. The employer is the consumer of the skilled manpower, and the workers are also the stakeholders here. "The tripartite approach is very beneficial and effective for all parties," explains Dr. Islam.



Payara Begum – a successful entrepreneur of CBT project

Payara Begum lives in a village called Notun Char in Munshiganj District. She lived in extreme poverty with her husband and seven children. During this hardship, she learned about The Association of Medical Doctors of Asia (AMDA, a local NGO supported by ILO) which provided her training on seed collection and preservation, and also offered her Tk. 5000 as a capital.

After May 2004, in her first year she collected paddy seed of Tk. 5000 and sold at Tk 11,000 with the gross profit of Tk. 6000. Next, Payara collected seeds from the farmers at the field, preserved them at home using the better technology learned at AMDA and finally sold to the farmers at a higher price. Now she earned Tk. One lac to one lac twenty thousand yearly. She has filled a low area with soil and made a sturdy house with wood and tin.

Payara Begum used to worry about the marriages of her four daughters and three sons. But today, all her daughters are married and the sons go to school. Now her dreams of owning her own land has come true and she can sow seeds and preserve them herself. Payara is proud of her independence today and she hopes that every woman be given an opportunity of skilled training to earn a better livelihood for her family.



The Directorate of Technical Education (DTE) is working with ILO on skills development and technical education. Professor Nitai Chandra Sutradhar, Director-General, DTE says, "TVET reform project is the focus here, emphasis on TVET reform is a qualification. When you go to the international market, you need a certain standard and we are implementing this with the help of ILO."

The most challenging element in TVET reform project is preparing "qualification standard". Talking about the most successful experiences DTE had with ILO over the years, Professor Sutradhar shared, "Work has been very methodical and transparent; we have learnt to work systematically."

TVET reform project is being implemented by keeping the Australian and Malaysian standards in mind, says Professor Sutradhar. The DTE is also updating the curriculum on the basis of competency. "We are preparing this in such a way that we know what type of skills a person can show after the training," says Professor Sutradhar. DTE is working in four sectors: information technology, leather products, agro-based food and shipbuilding.

Professor Sutradhar mentions that ILO is working across the world in developing people's technical and professional skills. He hopes that relationship with ILO will continue even if this project finishes. "Ties with ILO is a continuous process;

there would be many more areas in which we can seek ILO's assistance," he says.

Professor Sutradhar thinks ILO's tripartite approach to its work is an excellent strategy and participatory in nature. He suggests that ILO should have a bigger presence in Bangladesh. "ILO has big operations in many countries across the world, its presence in Bangladesh is less compared to other countries."

Waste Concern

Waste Concern is a non-governmental research based organization, working closely with government, private sector, international organizations and local communities to improve environment.



Waste Concern is currently conducting studies on green jobs in collaboration with ILO and the Ministry of Labour and Employment. "We realized there was no data on green jobs in Bangladesh, we do not have any baseline survey on this, so with ILO we conducted a short study which we call 'inventory'," says A.H. Md. Maqsood Sinha, the Co-Founder of Waste Concern.

Globally, green job has been defined, but it is yet to have a definition for Bangladesh. First of all, green job is environmentally friendly and does not add to the greenhouse gas emission. Secondly, it ensures "decent jobs" which encompasses workers' health and safety. "We have done studies on this trying to find out the sectors where green jobs can be implemented. For example, we have studied the renewable energy sector which, we think, can create green jobs. We've also worked on the construction and waste management sectors," explains Mr. Sinha.

Bangladesh is now trying to find out that who is doing what in this sector. Mr. Sinha thinks that creating green jobs is a new concept and ILO is the

right organization for promoting it. "The ILO could inspire Ministry of Labour through its studies on green jobs. It had taken government officials to an international conference in Japan which has been very beneficial for Bangladesh officials. The ILO has enriched us with the knowledge about green jobs," praises Mr. Sinha.

"Before formulating any policy, we need to have data, we need baseline information. We need to know how many jobs we would lose or gain if we implement green jobs. A sudden policy without any information may cost many people their jobs. But if we have sector-wise information, we can decide on how to proceed on formulating a concrete national policy," says Mr. Sinha.

He says that ILO is also trying to build the capacity of Bangladesh through international experts working in the country. Recently, Waste Concern had an ILO consultant for capacity building of their staff.

While talking about how social partners, private organizations and

civil society can work together to assist ILO in creating green jobs in the country, Mr. Sinha says, "Workshops, awareness building programmes and training programmes will be very helpful at this stage. NGOs and social organizations are already working in this sector. I would also ask the media to contribute in promoting green jobs. People of Bangladesh lack awareness. We are still working with the basics such as health and safety issue."

The issue of emission lies in the advanced level and Bangladesh needs awareness on this. Bangladesh also needs to bring in technology from developed countries to mitigate climate change. It also needs to increase investment in sectors that are not emitting greenhouse gases. It is possible to make hazardous sectors eco-efficient and Bangladesh has the technology to bring down the emission level. "For that, only policies won't work," opines Mr. Sinha, "the green job projects needs to show people that green jobs are possible."

Mr. Sinha thinks that there are many challenges in front of ILO. He points out, "We do not have a national policy for promoting recycling. We need the policy for setting a specific target. It would be difficult to implement green jobs or creating a system for recycling without a national policy. What we have now done is in an informal way which is not very hygienic."

The informal sector recycling needs to be strengthened through a policy. It does not have government support and is working on its own. When a national policy is developed, all informal recycling sector jobs will turn into green jobs."



The Refugee and Migratory Movements Research Unit (RMMRU), an affiliate of the University of Dhaka, has been functioning as a research, training, and policy advocacy institution since 1996. Its primary focus is on migration, refugee, displacement, and governance issues.

"We started working on refugee issues and by 1997, migrant workers' issues became one of our major tasks. It was ILO that provided us the initial funding," says Dr. Tasneem Siddiqui, the Chair of RMMRU.

The funding was to hold a workshop on the responsibility of the state towards migrant workers. RMMRU managed to get four sitting ministers and four leaders of the opposition to attend the workshop. "We could make them realize that labour migration is one of the areas that require serious work," Dr. Siddiqui explains.

At that time, no one in the private or government sector had any information on migrant labour. They came to realize that remittance is one of the driving forces of Bangladesh economy.

Dr. Siddiqui emphasizes that Bangladesh must immediately ratify ILO Convention No. 97 on Migration for Employment and 1990 UN International Convention on the Rights of All Migrants Workers and their Families.

"RMMRU was the first organization that started working with labour migration, and ILO was with us providing us the needed support to go about it. Our report has been the first report in Bangladesh on labour migration," says Dr. Siddiqui.

At that point RMMRU's relationship with Central Bank of Bangladesh also started and it implemented some of the findings of the ILO-sponsored study. "And now, various NGOs are working with the bank to transfer remittances quickly. BRAC is using all its rural centres for remittance transfer; and other NGOs are also doing the same," Dr. Siddiqui explains.

This type of whole new idea changed many things for migrant workers and ILO was all along with RMMRU during this time. Dr. Siddiqui thinks ILO assisted in the right kind of researches for the betterment of migrant workers.

Trade unions in Bangladesh did not know much about labour migration. The ILO and RMMRU together held a series of workshops to sensitize them about the plight of migrant labourers.

"The ILO was also part of the process when we drafted the national policy on overseas employment. We worked together to make Bangladesh the first country to have formulated an overseas employment policy in South Asia," adds Dr. Siddiqui.

The ILO also works very well with the Expatriate Welfare and Overseas Employment Ministry and it takes us as partners, she says. She thinks ILO, the government and the civil society collaborate in a mature way.

Dr. Siddiqui thinks that the whole issue of keeping the employers and workers at the same table since 1919 has been very important. "Then again, when you think of migrant workers, trade unions are coming up as the institution for workers. But trade unions do not have much relationship with migrant workers because they are in a different country and unions cannot make them their members," explains Dr. Siddiqui.

Therefore, she thinks, ILO's tripartite approach does not really work very well when it comes to labour migration.

"I feel there should be an association of migrant labour to become partners of ILO. That will produce much better result for migrant workers. The ILO needs to become more innovative in dealing with migrant workers," opines Dr. Siddiqui.

Dr. Siddiqui thinks, as the UN's specialized body, ILO has a major role to play when there is a financial crisis, because other organizations are not workers' friendly. "The ILO has the mandate to do something about it. Some countries are managing the crisis related to labour migration and some are failing to do so, ILO can help Bangladesh generate learning from other countries," she says.

Dr. Siddiqui emphasizes that Bangladesh must immediately ratify

ILO Convention No. 97 on Migration for Employment and 1990 UN International Convention on the Rights of All Migrants Workers and their Families. "Look at Sri Lanka and the Philippines, their labour market didn't shrink," she explains, adding "Bangladesh is dependant on remittance and we must look after the welfare of migrant workers".

Dr. Siddiqui wants ILO as a major partner in labour migration area. "They have knowledge, expertise and the right kind of attitude

towards the migrant workers. If a pre-departure training can be arranged, the migrant workers would benefit. Also, there is the issue of decent work condition for migrant labourers. These are the areas in which ILO should go into action," says Dr. Siddiqui.

She concludes, "ILO should provide technical assistance to the government in areas such as rights-based trainings to Migrant Workers' Protection Committee in the rural areas," she adds.

Migration and Workers Rights

Welfare Association for the Rights of Bangladeshi Emigrants (WARBE) Development Foundation



WARBE Development Foundation is a welfare association for the rights of Bangladeshi Emigrants, working mostly with returnee migrants since 1997. Initially, the organization did not have the vision on how to uphold the dignity of migrant workers. "When we came in contact with ILO, we found out that this international organization has a big role to play on the migrant work-

ers issues. It has adopted two major treaties on these workers," says Syed Saiful Haque, the Chairman of WARBE Development Foundation, a partner organization of ILO.

When Mr. Haque's organization started working, associations and NGOs were not that much involved with ILO. But over the years, many things have changed within ILO. "It

now recognizes us as a social partner," says Mr. Haque.

WARBE, in 2000, with the assistance of ILO organized International Migrants' Day for social awareness. "We staged a rally on that day and the objective was to raise awareness about migrant workers' issues. At the same time, we could also draw attention of the government to ILO conventions," explains Mr. Haque.

Later in 2008, WARBE Development Foundation completed two advocacy pilot projects with ILO on ILO Conventions and Multilateral Framework.

According to Mr. Haque, there are many achievements of ILO. "The best among those is the issue of child labour in garment sector. Elimination of child labour is in its last phase now," he says.

Mr. Haque elaborates that ILO has been training the trade unions in Bangladesh. It has also played a

constructive role to cope with Bangladesh's labour unrest, he adds.

In Mr. Haque's opinion, it is essential for Bangladesh to sign and ratify ILO Convention No. 97. Bangladesh faces a huge problem regarding migrant labourers encountering tough time in Malaysia. "If we sign and ratify the ILO Convention 97, the recruiters in those countries would not be able to treat our workers as badly as they do now," opines Mr. Haque.

"Not only Malaysia," he says, Bangladeshi workers are now going to various developed countries which are signatory to ILO Conventions. "Look at the Philippines and Sri

Lanka; they are sending their workers on the basis of the Convention and are doing very well".

Mr. Haque feels that there is a gap between Bangladesh government and ILO. "Previously Bangladesh had only Labour Ministry and ILO, but now we have another Ministry named Expatriate Welfare Ministry. The lack of coordination between these two ministries makes ILO's work difficult in Bangladesh," explains Mr. Haque, while talking about ILO's approach in Bangladesh.

However, he says ILO is now trying to work directly with the Ministry of Expatriate Welfare.

Mr. Haque wants ILO to convince Bangladesh to ratify its Convention on migrant workers so that migrant workers of Bangladesh can benefit from it. "The Convention has all the details about safeguarding the rights of the labourers such as insurance, social protection, compensation, etc," he explains.

Mr. Haque also wants ILO to put more emphasis on Bangladeshi domestic workers who work both at home and abroad.

Bangladesh Ovibashi Mohila Sramik Association

Migration and Workers Rights



Bangladesh Ovibashi Mohila Sramik Association (BOMSA) has been working with ILO for a long time on raising health awareness for female migrant workers. "BOMSA is the only organization working on female migrant workers," says Ms. Sumaiya Islam, BOMSA Project

Director.

The women who go abroad as domestic workers face various risks. The ILO helps BOMSA financially and technically in raising awareness of the workers to minimize the health risks, says Ms. Islam.

BOMSA has trained a total of 780 female workers on HIV awareness since 2006. The organization has been following up the workers who were trained before going abroad, "Those who were trained now know all about personal hygiene and we have interviewed the workers who come back after some time. All of them said that they were benefited by the training," says Ms. Islam.

"In Bangladesh, we can talk to the government and labourers, but we can hardly talk to the government officials of other countries. This is where ILO comes in and can play an important role. Our female labourers are working in other countries and we need the legal framework of that country to safeguard their rights. The ILO can play a big role in helping us know about the laws of those countries," emphasizes Ms. Islam.

The ILO also helps in workers' grievances with its legal framework. "ILO has helped us pay the money to the labourers who returned from Malaysia. They didn't get any money from their employers, and ILO helped us with its Charter," explains Ms. Islam.

Ms. Islam thinks ILO can help mitigate the current financial downturn. "Let us look at Philippines and Sri Lanka. How are they facing the downturn? The respective governments are helping the returnee workers from a fund and helping them to find employment within the country," elaborates Ms. Islam.

She thinks the downturn is not going to last long and when it's over, the government and ILO should search new markets and make arrangements for the returnee

workers to find work abroad. "What ILO currently needs is to suggest the government how to develop the workers' skills and knowledge," says Ms. Islam.

Talking about the advantages of ILO's tripartite approach, Ms. Islam says that it helps to ensure the rights of the workers. "Previously, it was difficult for us to make the government realize about the rights of the workers, but when this approach was in place, we came closer to the policy planners so they could hear about the workers' issues directly," explains Ms. Islam.

Ms. Islam expects ILO to accommodate the female migrant workers in the formal sector. "Female workers are not getting the facilities they are supposed to get and I hope ILO would create an environment for

them. I also wish ILO could make all information available for the migrant workers so that they can be prepared" hopes Ms. Islam. "The would-be workers need a few information centres in Bangladesh as well," says she.

In her message on the occasion on ILO 90th anniversary, Sumaiya Islam hopes ILO to always stand for the rights of migrant workers.



Bangladesh Institute for Labour Studies (BILS) was established in 1995, with the support and active participation of the major National Trade Union Federations to prop up the endeavors of the labour movement. Since its inception, it has been working with the ILO on labour issues.

BILS has jointly organized a number of research and training programmes with ILO. They have conducted research on organizing the informal sector; impact on Multi Fibre Agreement phase-out in Ready-Made Garment (RMG) sector; capacity building and developing training manuals on organizational health and safety; translation and dissemination of child labour manual and awareness-raising programmes for trade union leaders; Training Manual and conducting training programme on the Labour Act 2006 in divisional cities of Bangladesh; leadership development manual for National Trade Union Confederations.

Mr. Khan is of the view that ILO can adopt programmes on skill development and employment generation 'training and retraining' to face the ongoing financial crisis.

BILS in collaboration with NCCWE and ILO, recently organized a seminar on the 60th anniversary of ILO Convention 87 on Freedom of Association and Convention 98 on Collective Bargaining, in Dhaka. On this occasion, BILS published three thematic posters (on RMG, ship-breaking and Export Promotion Zone sectors) and also conducted a study on the status of freedom of association and collective bargaining in Bangladesh and presented the study report in the seminar. BILS also worked closely with NCCWE relating freedom of association and collective bargaining.

"In future," says Mr. Nazrul Islam Khan, Executive Director, "BILS and ILO can work together on labour issues especially in the areas of Labour Law implementation, occupational

health, safety and environment, organizing the un-organized workers in informal sectors, decent work agenda of ILO and capacity-building of trade unions".

He said that BILS has contributed in formulating the Labour Act 2006 and always supported in reviewing the Act. "There should be an in-depth study to revise the Labour Act, 2006 as necessary in line with ILO Conventions," says Mr. Khan.

The ILO always has a positive influence in improving Bangladesh's labour situation. "The ILO has helped in capacitating trade unions on different issues related to the rights of workers," says Mr. Khan.

The ILO also supports the trade union movement and helps build their capacity to participate in social dialogue. Apart from this, ILO has assisted in developing skills for organizing and collective bargaining, prevention and elimination of the worst forms of child labour in urban informal economy, and in RMG sector.

Mr. Khan is of the view that in the age of globalization, a big challenge lies ahead for ILO to create a favourable environment for the labourers. "Moreover, it is challenging for ILO to ensure international labour standards in Bangladesh. Another challenge is to ensure the implementation of its decent work agenda," says Mr. Khan.



The Pioneer Trade Association of 4524 garment factory owners in Bangladesh gets the credit of contributing to the national exchequer for the last 24 years. The RMG sector is the major export sector and has earned US\$ 9.2 billion in the export basket during the fiscal year 2006-07. Besides this financial aspect, Bangladesh Garments Manufacturers Exporters' Association (BGMEA) has greatly been contributing to the development of social sector of the country that acclaimed national and international recognition.

BGMEA is committed to ensuring that the labour laws of the country are being practiced, and workers are provided their basic rights as maternity leave, payment of minimum wages, overtime, appointment card, and ID card etc. BGMEA is also operating a number of projects and programs to ensure improved healthcare, workplace safety and labour rights of the garment workers in consonance with the Labour Standards set by the Government and ILO.

BGMEA has set up a worldwide

replicable model by eliminating an estimated 10,546 child laborers from the Garment Sector of Bangladesh with the active support of the US Government.

BGMEA signed the first Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the ILO and UNICEF, on 4th July 1995. The project components included: non-formal education, skill training like tailoring and embroidery, garments machine maintenance, garments manufacturing, wool knitting, auto electricity and electronics, and subsistence stipend under the BGMEA 'Earn and Learn Program. Under this MoU, some 9,500 children were enrolled in 336 schools run by BRAC and Gano Sahajya Sangstha, as the two implementing partners.

BGMEA signed the second MoU with ILO in Geneva on 16 June 2000 to keep the garment factories child-labour-free. Since then BGMEA member factories are freed from child labour. Presently, BGMEA monitors are monitoring child labour extensively in the RMG industries to keep this sector free from child

BGMEA Compliance Cell: Watchdog of CSR

The BGMEA established a Compliance Cell in 2003. It trained its 39 officials to carry out and sustain the activities of the BGMEA-ILO Partnership Project. A total of 505 factories were audited for Workplace Improvement Plan (WIP) for improving occupational safety and health of workers. Brand buyers like Wal-Mart, SEARS, Carrefour, Hennes & Mauritz (H&M) and ILO educated the officials on their role and responsibilities, and individual Codes of Conduct to raise awareness among member factories and educate the manufacturers on compliance issues.

BGMEA-ILO Partnership Project:

The ILO and BGMEA signed another agreement for three years (March 2002 – February 2005) on "A Partnership approach to improving labour relations and working conditions in the Bangladesh garment industry." This project implemented the Workplace Improvement Plan and benefitted 302 factories (242 factories in Dhaka and 60 factories in Chittagong).



the 90 wards in Dhaka," elaborates Mr. Khan.

RIC had supported the families of the children to compensate for their joblessness. "Social mobilization was an important part here and we used to implement this with the help of ILO," explains Mr. Khan.

Experience of working with ILO has taken RIC a long way. It has another ongoing partnership with ILO on rehabilitating the weavers after the 2004 flood which is advancing successfully.

"We have submitted a proposal on income-generation in Dhaka City Corporation area and provided our experience and success. We are hoping to get ILO's support," says Mr. Khan.

The Resource Integration Centre (RIC) had a partnership with ILO-IPEC from February 2002 to March 2006 on combating child labour. "Our main job was to withdraw the children who were engaged in worst forms of child labour," says Md. Abul Haseeb Khan, the Director of RIC.

The project had three components: non-formal education for children, skilled training for teenage children and the socio-economic empowerment of child workers families. Dhaka Ahsania Mission worked on non-formal education, UCEP (underprivileged Children's Education Programme) worked on skilled training and RIC worked for empowering the families of children financially.

"We used to work at multipurpose centres in Dhaka where guardians of the children and owners of factories used to hold meeting with us," says Mr. Khan, "we used to motivate them for taking the children out from factories", he adds.

Partnership with ILO added value to the work of RIC. "This was a very

challenging job and we were excited to face it," says Mr. Khan. It enhanced the reputation of the organization and a new angle of poverty eradication was discovered. "Poverty is a multi-dimensional problem and we were fighting against poverty from this angle very successfully," Mr. Khan points out.

The impact of this partnership was immense. There were continuous exchange of ideas and opinions. "We could not be so open with any other organization; and we could establish a link with the poor people living in





With the assistance of ILO-IPEC Urban Informal Economy project, Dhaka Ahsania Mission (DAM) implemented the programme on prevention and elimination of worst forms of child labour in urban informal sectors of Dhaka and Chittagong (2002 to 2007). "We completed the project very successfully," says, Mr. Kazi Rafiqul Alam, DAM President and Chief Executive.

The project was a package of strategies and interventions on a pilot basis in order to test its effectiveness. "A total of 20,000 working children were identified and systematically withdrawn from work," says Mr. Alam, adding that "another 5,000 younger siblings of those children were prevented from entering the worst forms of child labour".

In the past, ILO supported a project on skills building of children. A total of 35,000 children were enrolled and the dropout rate was only 9 percent. "These children graduated from a

one-year course," says Mr. Alam. "We followed them up and found that 80 percent of these children have later graduated from mainstream schools. We could also convince their parents about their responsibilities towards their children," Mr. Alam adds.

DAM also sensitized the employers, "They declared their workplaces free of child labour," says Mr. Alam.

"DAM would like to continue the project on child labour in a more comprehensive way with the assistance from ILO. It also has a plan to work with the elderly, as the

number of elderly people is increasing in Bangladesh," says Mr. Alam.

The impact of working with ILO was immense. "First, it was quite an honour to work with ILO; and then we could save many children from the burden of worst forms of child labour," Mr. Alam explained.

The President of DAM thinks that ILO has the right kind of attitude towards labour issues, and hopes to work with ILO in future as well.





The ILO- IPEC's Time Bound Programme (TBP) on Urban Informal Economy Project is rehabilitating working children and providing non formal education and vocational training to them, and economically empowering their families to earn a decent living. The project focuses on strengthening the knowledge base and preparing models that regulate, monitor and address hazardous child labour in an urban informal economy for country-wide replication.

One of the interesting case studies of the project is Jamila's life story from being a domestic worker to a self-employed woman through a small loan scheme of the project. She has a different perspective of life now, after getting empowered and believes in educating her children to give them a meaningful living.

Jamila is a forty year old woman who migrated from Rangpur to Dhaka, seven years ago to earn a better living for raising her children. She now lives with her husband and

children in Maniknagar, Dhaka. From 2002, Jamila had received a six yearly loan through the Project's Socio-Economic Empowerment (SEE) Program of Tk. 1, 05, 000. Prior to receiving her first loan, Jamila was a domestic worker, and then started working as a vegetable seller on the roadside near the local bazaar. Her income and her husband's income as a rickshaw puller were not adequate to provide her family a decent standard of living.

By attending the meetings of the project awareness campaigns, Jamila has learnt the value and importance of education. She also feels that without education, girls will be more vulnerable and it will be more difficult for them to find appropriate jobs. Stressing the value of education, Jamila said, "I did not know the value of education, but now I know that it is as asset which will take my children a long way."

Prior to her involvement with the Project, Jamila's daughter and elder son, aged 18 and 21, completed

class III in BRAC school in their village. Jamila was compelled to send her 14 and Seven year old sons to work in the construction sector and in a grill workshop, respectively. She and her husband felt that the workplace would be much safer for their children than their residence, and the work would also teach them marketable skills in absence of formal education.

However, following Jamila's participation in the Project's SEE Program, almost a year after her family's arrival in Dhaka, their socio-economic status began to improve noticeably. Having learnt to operate a self run business by attending Samity meetings, Jamila began her own business as a vegetable vendor. Now Jamila's family's daily income is Tk 500-600/- which is much higher than what she earned when they came to Dhaka.

Jamila's participation in the Project's Program, and establishment of her independent business has empowered her and given her the decision making power in the family. Jamila's son, Muhammad, expressed this change clearly by observing that earlier his father made all the decisions, but now his parents make them jointly. Jamila's husband also admitted that his wife made all major household-related decisions and acts like his "bank" by managing family finances.

Jamila enrolled her 13 year old son Muhammad in the Project's NFE classes. After attending NFE classes for one year, he moved on to attend Maniknagar Primary school. Now he is studying in class II, and is able to study and play after school and is very happy about his life. He feels that education will provide him with better opportunities in the future.



I want to become a doctor.....says Farjana

Jahanara is a thirty years old mother of two daughters - ten and five years old, and a one and half year old son. She lives in Kadamtola, Basabo, and have taken two yearly loans - amounting to Tk 15,000 – under the Urban Informal Economy Project's Socio Economic Empowerment Program. Jahanara works as a home-based worker and takes orders from factories for embroidery work.

Her elder daughter, Farjana, used to work in a small candle factory/workshop as an unpaid apprentice for an average of three hours a day, for six days a week. It was only following her mother's participation in the SEE Program that Farjana stopped working and was enrolled in the Project's NFE Programs. Soon after this, Farjana was mainstreamed into the formal education system, and now studies in Class III at South Basabo Primary School. Farjana feels "good" about going to school and studying, and she wants to be a doctor when she grows up.



Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS) expects to hold the next child labour survey in 2010. "We are now talking to ILO about resources and preliminary preparations for that," says A.Y.M. Ekramul Haque, Director-General, BBS.

"We are very glad that ILO has been supporting us technically and financially for conducting such surveys. We also hope that ILO would continue this support in future as well," says Mr. Haque.

He thinks ILO can play a significant role in improving Bangladesh's

labour sector, especially the informal sector.

"The ILO and the government can train unskilled and semi-skilled workers who are working within the country. Trained workers would have better income," explains Mr. Haque. He also thinks workers who want to go abroad should also be trained for better employment.

"The ILO can help us find market demands for workers in Europe, America and the Middle East," he adds, Bangladesh should also look for regional markets, he says.

"We should train the workers in sectors that can contribute more in the GDP," Mr. Haque opines. According to Mr. Haque, ILO's contribution in Bangladesh over the last 36 years has been unique. "We can specifically say that ILO has been training unskilled labourers during the past years," says Mr. Haque.

"I think ILO's vision should be to turn Bangladesh's workers into an able and productive labour force," Mr. Haque hopes.

The BBS has been working with the ILO since a long time and has conducted the following surveys:

- Survey on Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children in 2008
- Baseline Survey for Determining Hazardous Child Labour in 2005
- Labour Force Survey 2003, National Child Labour Survey 2002-2003
- Report on Working Children in Metropolitan Cities in 2002



In partnership with the ILO, Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies has conducted several surveys during the last five years.", says Mr. Quazi Sahabuddin, Director General, BIDS. These are:

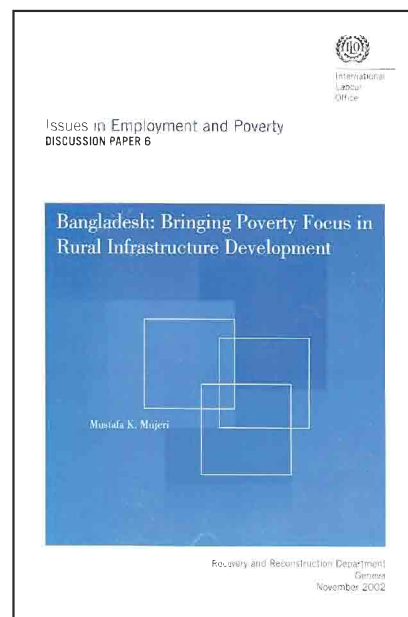
- Employment Poverty Linkage, led by Dr. Rushidan Islam Rahman
- Employment Route to Poverty Alleviation in Bangladesh, led by Dr. Rushidan Islam Rahman
- Employment Intensive Growth in Bangladesh, led by Dr. Nazneen Ahmed
- Mapping and Analysis of Growth Oriented Industrial Sub-sectors, led by Dr. Abdul Hye Mondal.

Mr. Sahabuddin thinks these studies will be helpful for the government.

He feels ILO is the forerunner of implementing a condition for decent work in Bangladesh, as well as across the world. "If you create this atmosphere for decent work, ultimately the owners would be benefited, as the productivity of all workers would increase," Mr. Sahabuddin explains.

"ILO can highlight this aspect in Bangladesh," he adds. "These efforts have to be an ongoing process in a country like Bangladesh," he says.

Talking about poverty and unemployment in Bangladesh, Sahabuddin says that if there is growth, there would be employment and ultimately it contributes to a country's economy. "However, mere growth would not help," he says, "one has to make sure it is an employment-intensive growth," reflects Mr. Sahabuddin.



Key events in the ILO's history

- 1919 Founding of the ILO. The organization was created by the Treaty of Versailles, which ended the First World War and founded the League of Nations.
- 1926 The International Labour Conference (ILC) sets up a supervisory mechanism to monitor the application of international labour standards.
- 1944 Adoption of the Declaration of Philadelphia, encapsulating the core principles of the ILO.
- 1946 The ILO becomes the first specialized agency of the newly-formed United Nations.
- 1969 The ILO is awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for its promotion of social justice and peace among nations.
- 1998 Adoption of the Declaration on the Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work.
- 1999 The ILO adopts the concept of decent work as the contemporary expression of its historical mandate.
- 2004 The World Commission on the Social Dimension of Globalization releases its report, "A Fair Globalization: Creating Opportunities for All".
- 2006 ILO's members in Asia and the Pacific commit themselves to an Asian Decent Work Decade, and the overall goal of full, productive and decent employment for all by 2015.
- 2008 The ILC adopts the ILO Declaration on Social Justice and Fair Globalization, positioning the ILO to meet the challenges of globalization through the Decent Work Agenda.

ILO Conventions Ratified by Bangladesh

Sl. No.	Convention	Ratification date
1	C1 Hours of Work (Industry) Convention, 1919	22:06:1972
2	C4 Night Work (Women) Convention, 1919	22:06:1972
3	C6 Night Work of Young Persons (Industry) Convention, 1919	22:06:1972
4	C11 Right of Association (Agriculture) Convention, 1921	22:06:1972
5	C14 Weekly Rest (Industry) Convention, 1921	22:06:1972
6	C15 Minimum Age (Trimmers and Stokers) Convention, 1921	22:06:1972
7	C16 Medical Examination of Young Persons (Sea) Convention, 1921	22:06:1972
8	C18 Workmen's Compensation (Occupational Diseases) Convention, 1925	22:06:1972
9	C19 Equality of Treatment (Accident Compensation) Convention, 1925	22:06:1972
10	C21 Inspection of Emigrants Convention, 1926	22:06:1972
11	C22 Seamen's Articles of Agreement Convention, 1926	22:06:1972
12	C27 Marking of Weight (Packages Transported by Vessels) Convention, 1929	22:06:1972
13	C29 Forced Labour Convention, 1930	22:06:1972
14	C32 Protection against Accidents (Dockers) Convention (Revised), 1932	22:06:1972
15	C45 Underground Work (Women) Convention, 1935	22:06:1972
16	C59 Minimum Age (Industry) Convention (Revised), 1937	22:06:1972
17	C80 Final Articles Revision Convention, 1946	22:06:1972
18	C81 Labour Inspection Convention, 1947	22:06:1972
19	C87 Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise Convention, 1948	22:06:1972
20	C89 Night Work (Women) Convention (Revised), 1948	22:06:1972
21	C90 Night Work of Young Persons (Industry) Convention (Revised), 1948	22:06:1972
22	C96 Fee-Charging Employment Agencies Convention (Revised), 1949	22:06:1972
23	C98 Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining Convention, 1949	22:06:1972
24	C100 Equal Remuneration Convention, 1951	28:01:1998
25	C105 Abolition of Forced Labour Convention, 1957	22:06:1972
26	C106 Weekly Rest (Commerce and Offices) Convention, 1957	22:06:1972
27	C107 Indigenous and Tribal Populations Convention, 1957	22:06:1972
28	C111 Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention, 1958	22:06:1972
29	C116 Final Articles Revision Convention, 1961	22:06:1972
30	C118 Equality of Treatment (Social Security) Convention, 1962	22:06:1972
31	C144 Tripartite Consultation (International Labour Standards) Convention, 1976	17:04:1979
32	C149 Nursing Personnel Convention, 1977	17:04:1979
33	C182 Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999	12:03:2001



মুক্ত বাংলাদেশ টাইম
তিরোধ দিবস
২০০৫

রিসোর্স ইনিকিয়েশন অসোসিয়েশন

উঠান বৈঠক

পল্লী মন্ডির মোল সন্ধ্যা (ম)
বাসক ও মনুফের জেলা যশউদ্দেশ্য
সহিতবাসী অধিকার একা কনিষ্ঠ



