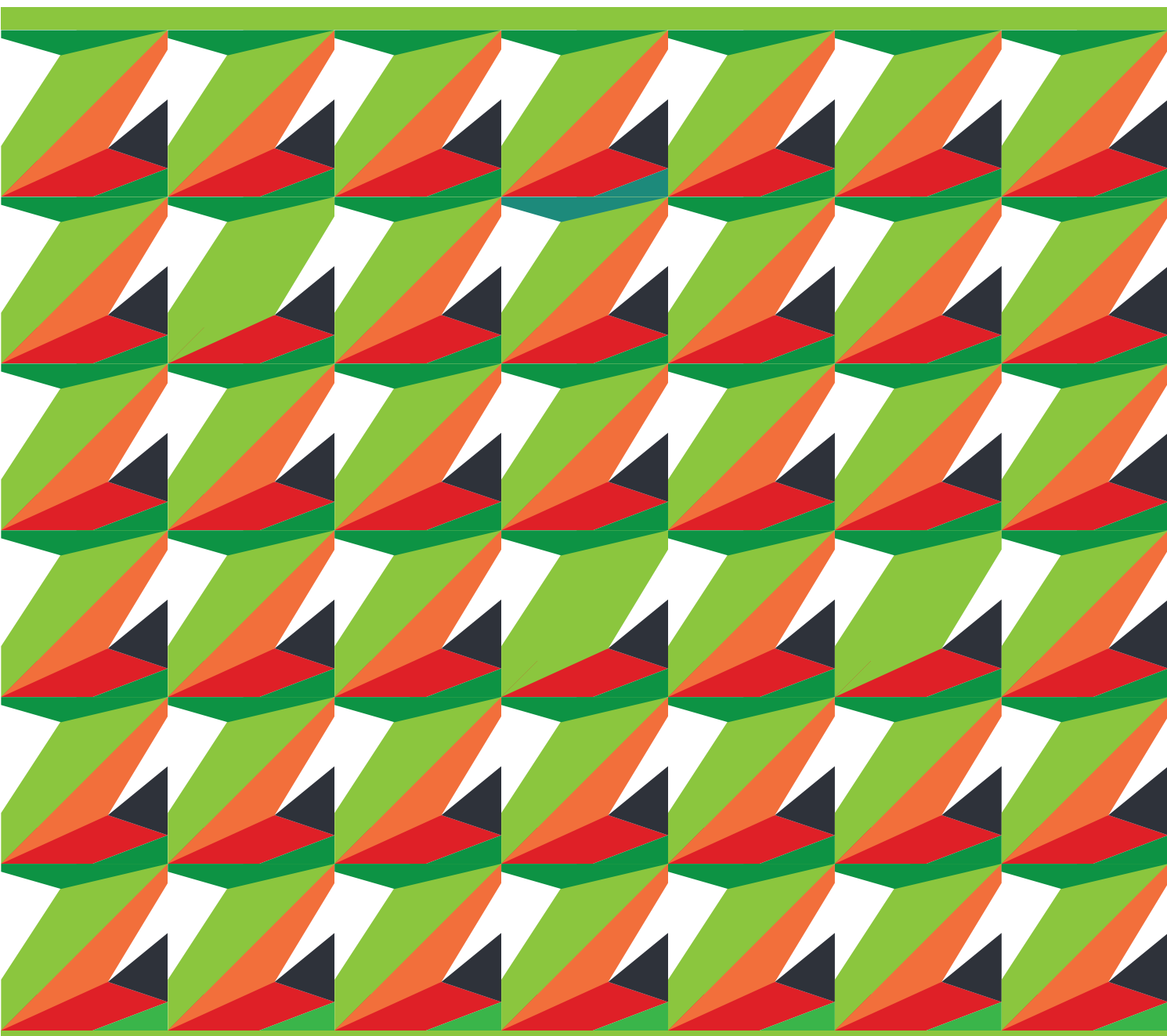


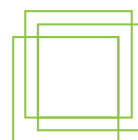


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A REVIEW OF SOCIAL
SAFETY-NET PROGRAMMES
**TO MAKE THEM MORE RESPONSIVE TO THE
NEEDS OF CHILD LABOUR IN BANGLADESH**



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Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work Branch (FUNDAMENTALS)
International Labour Organization (ILO)

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Abbreviations

BGMEA	Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association
BKMEA	Bangladesh Knitwear Manufacturers and Exporters Association
CFB	Child-focused Budget
CLEAN	Child Labour Elimination Action Network
CRP	Child Right Protection
CT	Cash transfers
DIFE	Department of Inspection for Factories and Establishments
ESDO	Eco Social Development Organization
FFE	Food for Education Programme
KIIs	Key Informant Interviews
MJF	The Manusher Jonno Foundation
MoLE	Ministry of Labour and Education
MWCA	Ministry of Women and Children Affairs
NCLEP	National Child Labour Elimination Policy
NCLWC	The National Child Labour Welfare Council
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NPA	National Plan of Action
NSSS	National Social Security Strategy
OMS	Open Market Sales
PKSF	Palli Karma Shahayak Foundation
SDF	Social Development Framework
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SF	School Feeding
SPF	Social Protection Floor
SSNP	Social Safety-Net Programmes
UNO	Upazila Nirbahi Officer
VGD	Vulnerable Group Development programme
VGf	Vulnerable Group Feeding programme
WFM	Work For Money programme



Executive Summary

Background and Rationale

In Bangladesh many poor families rely on the income generated by their children to meet basic family needs, and as such child labour is often highly valued in these families. In addition, employers prefer children as they are cheaper and considered to be more compliant and submissive than adults. That is why it is common to see children serving at roadside tea stalls, working as domestic help, factory workers or in motor workshops and selling goods to people on the road.

According to the Child Labour Survey Bangladesh 2013, there are 1.70 million children involved in child labour, which accounts for about 4.30 per cent of the entire child population and 49.3 per cent of working children. Both “push” and “pull” factors are at play for taking children out of school and compelling them to become involved in child labour. These include poverty, poor quality of education, lack of relevancy in lessons, language used, lack of physical accessibility, non-existence of school in the child’s community etc. About 63 per cent of children involved in child labour are currently not attending school and 8.4 per cent never attended any school.

The Bangladesh Government has enacted the National Child Labour Elimination Policy 2010 in order to make meaningful changes in the lives of the children by withdrawing them from all forms of child labour including hazardous work and worst forms of child labour. The National Plan of Action (NPA) was enacted in 2013 to ensure that the National Child Labour Elimination Policy 2010 (NCLEP) is successfully implemented.

The objective of this study is to explore ways by which to make social safety-net programmes more responsive to the needs of child labourers and/or children vulnerable to child labour. In addition, different development partners and local NGOs (such as Save the Children; Care Bangladesh, the Manusher Jonno Foundation) have been implementing a number of programmes and projects in various parts of Bangladesh to eliminate child labour. This report reviews the existing social safety-net programmes of Bangladesh to find out how the child labour issue has been addressed (directly or indirectly) through the social safety-net programmes and suggests possible ways to fill the gaps in this regard.

Social safety-net programmes in Bangladesh with a focus on child labour or the child population

Transfers for children and families, in cash or in kind, through social protection mechanisms are critical for realizing children's rights by preventing them from falling into poverty, preventing child mortality, contributing to their healthy development and well-being, improving their access to essential goods and services, and reducing child labour. Though the National Social Security Strategy (NSSS) has taken a comprehensive approach to provide social protection, Bangladesh's social security system remains complex, comprising a large number of programmes and managed by 25 ministries/divisions. The government has classified the social safety-net programmes into two broad categories: programmes for social protection and programmes for social empowerment.

The Government of Bangladesh has increased budgetary allocations in social safety-net programmes (SSNPs) over the last couple of years. The absolute allocation for SSNPs has increased from Bangladesh Taka (BDT) 230.98 billion in FY 2012–13 to BDT 641.77 billion in FY 2018–19. In the FY 2018–19, the government has allocated 9.52 per cent of its total SSNPs budget for social protection programmes compared to 2.72 per cent to programmes for social empowerment. However, programmes under social empowerment are (on average) smaller in size both in terms of allocation and the number of beneficiaries. Most of the empowerment programmes are found under the wider development programmes of the government. However, both the empowerment and protection programmes are necessary for addressing the child labour issue. While protection programmes such as the Vulnerable Group Feeding (VGF) programme, or Old-Age Allowance can directly serve to increase household income and thereby extend positive impacts to reduce child labour, the social empowerment programmes such as the Stipend Programmes for children or Rural Infrastructure Development have the capacity to generate multiple impacts at the household level and thus generate sustainable advancement in both poverty reduction and reduction of child labour in the long run.

Financing child-focused social safety-net programmes

Ministry budget allocations for children (including child labour) reveal that all the ministries related to education are the main contributors to child-focused programmes. However, apart from the school-based programmes for children, allocation for other programmes is very limited. As poverty is the root cause of child labour, school-based programmes alone are not enough to shift children away from becoming involved in child labour. It is therefore necessary to increase allocations for supportive programmes including cash transfer programmes for children in extreme poverty. Moreover, cash transfer programmes for various groups (Vulnerable Group Development programme (VGD) and, Vulnerable Group Feeding programme, for poor mothers etc.) should take into account the child labour aspect when determining the beneficiaries. The programmes to combat poverty can prevent child labour by enhancing the coping strengths of families who are subject to economic and social vulnerabilities due to poverty, risks, shocks and deprivation. Evaluation of the Food-For-Education Programme (FFE) in Bangladesh targeting deprived areas by giving 100 kg of rice per year to households showed that it reduced the incidence of child labour by 0.04 per cent and 0.02 per cent for boys and girls respectively (Browne 2016).

Child-focused Budget (CFB)

A child-focused budget does not address child labour directly or specifically, hence specific budget allocation focusing on this issue needs to be included in the budget. Also, indications of the geographical distribution of the CFB will ensure that government and NGO allocation do not overlap.

Way forward in reducing the gap of social safety-net programmes and eliminating child labour in Bangladesh

It was evident from the study that although there are a good number of social safety-net programmes in Bangladesh, those that specifically address the issue of child labour are still limited. Such action is mainly carried out through the school stipend and school feeding programmes and some other rehabilitation and cash transfer programmes for children. However, as seen above, allocation is limited for most programmes for children apart from those that are school-based. It is also felt that children could benefit more if various support mechanisms under the social safety net could determine beneficiaries by taking into consideration the child labour aspect.

Redesigning social safety-net programmes

There is a link between poverty and child labour. A child from a poor family is more likely to turn to child labour in the future. Hence, in designing a safety-net programme, the government should include more of these families and give priority to the mother of a child involved in child labour through such a programme. Also, school-based programmes should attribute higher allocations for children who are engaged in child labour.

Creating a Database

It is very difficult to get detailed information on the safety-net programmes; only the list and budget was accessible and from a single source. An information web-portal under the Ministry of Planning or Ministry of Finance should be maintained to obtain detailed information on social safety-net programmes including the involvement of development partners and implementing NGOs (where applicable).

Coordination between the activities of different ministries

The elimination of existing child labour is not a permanent solution, rather creating strategies to prevent current and future children from becoming involved in child labour should be the optimal objective. Hence, coordination between different programmes is necessary through which the Ministry of Labour and Employment (MoLE) and the Ministry of Women and Children Affairs (MWCA) together with the Ministry of Education (both primary and secondary) need to coordinate with each other regularly. Every ministry now has its own Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) implementation agenda. Since the elimination of child labour is an important SDG target, various programmes targeting child labour elimination could be discussed on this platform.

Improving the efficiency and transparency of programmes under the social protection system

Safety-net programmes are too numerous in Bangladesh and most of them suffer from poor implementation and governance-related problems. It is necessary to evaluate completed child-focused safety-net programmes on a regular basis and for those that organize cash transfers, it is critical to ensure that the targeting and payment performance are both efficient and transparent.

Monitoring of programmes at the community and grassroots level

Participation of community-level leaders and representatives of local government, including local level NGOs can ensure that safety-net programmes actually contribute to the elimination of child labour. They can connect poor families with children engaged in child labour to the facilities of safety-net programmes. It is also necessary to sensitize local people on this matter.

Capacity building

Capacity building of actors, especially at the grassroots level, regarding issues related to the elimination of child labour, can go a long way towards the successful implementation of programmes, as well as the sensitization of people in the locality.

Promoting evidence-based policymaking

Social protection programmes should be designed on the basis of a wide range of data collected through household surveys or by maintaining administrative records.



1 Introduction

Since independence in 1971, the need for protecting the rights of children has been reflected in various policies and national initiatives of Bangladesh. The Children Act 1974, the National Children Policy 1994, the National Action Plan for Children 2005–2010, the Child Labour Survey 2002–03 as well as the ratification of the United Nations (UN) Convention on the Rights of the Child and several related International Labour Organization (ILO) conventions reflect important milestones of early and recent initiatives along the path of protecting child rights. One important aspect of the violation of rights of children is the prevalence of child labour. In Bangladesh many poor families rely on the income generated by their children to meet basic family needs, and so often highly value child labour. Poor orphans or abandoned children usually start working at a tender age for survival. Employers often prefer to employ children because they are cheaper and considered to be more submissive than adults. There are 1.7 million children engaged in child labour in Bangladesh. On average, these children work 39 hours a week and earn BDT 1 487 a week.¹

When children are compelled to work, they are often denied their rights to education, leisure and play. They may also face situations that make them vulnerable to trafficking, abuse, violence and exploitation. Though child labour has been eliminated from the formal sector, a wide range of child labour is observed in the informal sector: children serving at roadside tea stalls, working in motor workshops and selling goods to people on the road. Children also work as domestic help, factory workers etc.

Several initiatives have been undertaken by the Government of Bangladesh to address the issue of child labour. The Bangladesh Government enacted the National Child Labour Elimination Policy 2010² in order to make meaningful changes to the lives of the children by withdrawing them from all forms of child labour including hazardous work and worst forms of child labour. The National Plan of Action³ was enacted in 2013 to ensure that the NCLEP is successfully implemented. In this action plan, the government has chalked out several child protection programmes such as a child-focused budget, a child-sensitive social protection programme in the national budget etc. The government has also

- 1 Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics with support from International Labour Organization (ILO): *Child Labour Survey* (Bangladesh, 2013).
- 2 National Child Labour Elimination Policy 2010, Ministry of Labour and Employment Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh, March 2010.
- 3 National Plan of Action for Implementing the National Child Labour Elimination Policy, 2012–2016. Ministry of Labour and Employment Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh, April 2013.

adopted a list of Hazardous Child Labour⁴ which identifies 38 occupations that are hazardous for children.

The International Labour Organization (ILO) is supporting the Bangladesh Government in its endeavor to eliminate child labour. The ILO has completed implementing a global project titled “Country Level Engagement and Assistance to Reduce (CLEAR) Child Labour” under the International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC), within the Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work (FPRW) Branch, funded by the United States Department of Labor (USDOL). The main objective of this project was to build the capacities of 11 selected countries including Bangladesh to reduce child labour including its worst forms. It has been felt by stakeholders that one way of conceiving a sustainable initiative to eliminate child labour could be to make social safety-net programmes more responsive to the needs of child labourers and/or children vulnerable to be engaged in child labour.⁵ In addition, it is also important to understand the initiatives of different development partners and local NGOs (such as Save the Children; Care Bangladesh, the Manusher Jonno Foundation) active in various parts of Bangladesh to eliminate child labour. Some of these programmes are actually carried out as part of the government’s social safety-net programmes.

The National Child Labour Elimination Policy and the National Plan of Action have formed the basis of all interventions in the area of child labour. Activity no 7.1.3 of the Action Plan refers to the inclusion of child labour as a component of the social safety-net programme. It needs to be mentioned that as a signatory to the social protection floor initiative of the UN, Bangladesh needs to ensure that all children of the country enjoy minimum income security through transfers in cash or kind aiming at facilitating access to essential goods and services, such as nutrition, education and care.

This report will review the existing social safety-net programmes of Bangladesh to find out how the child labour issue has been addressed (directly or indirectly) in those programmes and will suggest possible ways to fill gaps in this regard. Thus, recommendations of this report will contribute directly to one of the nine areas of strategic intervention noted in the NCLEP.

-
- 4 Section 39.3 of the Bangladesh Labour Act, 2006 mentions that no adolescent shall be allowed in any establishment to clean, lubricate or adjust any part of machinery while that part is in motion or to work between moving parts, of any machinery which is in motion. Section 40 of this Act also mentions that (1) no adolescent shall work at any machine unless- (a) he has been fully instructed as to the dangers arising in connection with the machine and the precautions to be observed, and- (b) has received sufficient training in work at the machine, or is under adequate supervision by a person who has thorough knowledge and experience of the machine; (2) This provision shall apply to such machines as may be notified by the government to be of such a dangerous character that an adolescent ought not to work at them unless the requirements of sub-section (1) are complied with; (3) The government may from time to time publish in the official gazette the list such of hazardous works where no adolescent shall be employed.
 - 5 The term child labour refers to the engagement of children in any work that takes away all or most of their rights as children, i.e. right to attend regular school, uninterrupted mental and physical development. According to UNICEF, “Child labour is work that is likely to interfere with a child’s education and development; labour that exceeds a minimum number of hours, labour that is hazardous; and/or labour performed by a child who is underage according to state legislation.” (UNICEF, ILO, World Bank Group 2009). According to the ILO Minimum Age Convention (No. 138), 1973, Child labour consists of all children under 15 years including all children under 15 years of age who are economically active except (i) those who are under 5 years of age and (ii) those between 12-14 years who spend less than 14 hours a week on their jobs, unless their activities/ occupations are hazardous by nature or circumstances. Added to this are 15- 17 years old children in the worst forms of child labour. According to the Child Labour Survey Bangladesh 2013, a child who is 5-11 years old and is working for any period of time in a non-hazardous job is considered to be in child labour. Hazardous child labourers are those, irrespective of 5-17 years, working for more than 42 hours a week in a non-hazardous job or engaged in jobs listed as hazardous by government legislation.



2 How social protection contributes to eliminate child labour

"Child labour is an issue, which is widespread across the developing world and linked to poverty, one way or the other, and has the potential to cause intergenerational transmission of poverty by ensuring that a child is caught in a situation where lack of education from an early age causes future poverty, thus increasing the probability that future generations will also be caught in the same vicious cycle." (Gahlaut, 2011) This implies that addressing (solving or reducing) the poverty problem can increase the number of school-going children and reduce participation of children in the labour market. The literature on human capital investment posits that if child schooling is a normal good, the increased income will result in increased levels of school participation (Behrman and Knowles, 1999). Basu and Van's (1998) 'luxury axiom' states that child labour will decrease as incomes are raised above a subsistence threshold. Social safety-net programmes are key social protection programmes in many developing and least developed countries which provide income support to the poor people or raise income above a subsistence threshold. Thus, this programme not only helps poor people combat poverty but also child labour. Social protection addresses poverty, exclusion and vulnerability that are the root causes of child labour (Singh and McLeish, 2013). Barrientos et al. (2013) have identified three possible channels through which social transfers can influence child protection outcomes: direct effects observed where the objectives of social transfers are explicit child protection outcomes; indirect effects where the impact of social transfers on poverty and exclusion leads to improved child protection outcomes; and potential synergies in implementation of social transfers and child protection.

Singh and McLeish (2013) state that social protection can help to prevent child labour through three direct mechanisms; first, improving the economic position of households, enabling them to keep children in school for longer and reducing the necessity to send children to work; second, increasing the resilience of households to economic shocks making them less likely to have to resort to taking children out of school and pushing them into work; and third, through creating positive incentives to keep children in school and out of work, for example by making social protection benefits conditional on the achievement of certain health and education objectives. According to Sanfilippo et al. (2012) social protection helps to ensure access to social services, nutrition and education. The ILO recommends that social protection form a central pillar of responses against child labour, although it cannot eliminate child labour without other social support mechanisms (ILO, 2014).⁶ Therefore, ILO recommends a comprehensive social security system to combat child vulnerability.

⁶ ILO: World Social Protection Report 2014-15: *Building Economic Recovery, Inclusive Development and Social Justice* (Brookings Institution Press, 2014).

Thus, a number of sources of literature, some of which are mentioned above, have shown that social protection programmes that increase children's school attendance can directly or indirectly reduce child labour. Other social protection programmes that directly or indirectly decrease child labour are: direct cash transfers to poor families; old-age pensions being used to pay for children's education; measures to reduce the income insecurity of adults, including unemployment protection, employment guarantee schemes, disability benefits, maternity benefits and social pensions; access to health care services and health insurance; food-based programmes; and the provision of training programmes for the unemployed (ILO, 2014; Singh and McLeish, 2013). Therefore, one important approach to address the child labour problem is to carry out critical interventions through social protection programmes. Broadly speaking, child labour numbers decline if social transfers specifically target child labour or child schooling, which effectively limits children's capacity to work outside the home (Barrientos et al., 2013). The reduction in child labour hours is often less than proportionate to the rise in hours spent at school. The effects are stronger where extracurricular activities are included due to social transfer programmes providing for such activities.

According to the World Social Protection Report by ILO (2017), social protection plays a key role in achieving sustainable development, promoting social justice and realizing the human right to social security for all. This report has also noted that transfers for children and families, in cash or in kind, are critical for realizing children's rights by preventing them from falling into poverty, preventing child mortality, contributing to their healthy development and well-being, improving their access to essential goods and services, and reducing child labour. Social protection thus ensures that children can realize their full potential and enjoy an adequate standard of living. Therefore, ILO Recommendation No. 202 asserts that a state should establish and maintain a nationally defined Social Protection Floor (SPF), comprising basic social security guarantees to secure protection aimed at preventing or alleviating poverty, vulnerability and social exclusion. The SPF should include the following four minimum guarantees, as defined at a national level: (i) universal access to essential health care, including maternity care; (ii) basic income security for children, providing access to nutrition, education, care and any other necessary goods and services; (iii) basic income security for persons in active age unable to earn sufficient income, particularly in cases of sickness, unemployment, maternity and disability; (iv) basic income security for older persons. In a country like Bangladesh, which has started its journey to become a developing country by 2024, and where child labour is vastly visible in both rural and urban areas, it is crucial to address the child labour issue in order to ensure sustainable human capital for development.



3 Methodology of analysis

This study is based on the review of various secondary documents, published statistics, findings from several key informant interviews (KIIs) and responses of participants of a workshop where preliminary findings of this study were shared. The documents were mainly used for understanding the current situation of child labour in Bangladesh, reviewing the social safety-net programmes to identify the programmes aimed at children (directly or indirectly). KIIs were conducted with government officials, non-government organizations and academics. Findings from the literature review and KIIs were shared with a number of experts (including KII participants) and stakeholders. Finally, the responses from the participants of the workshop validated the preliminary findings and also gave further insight into various issues related to the elimination of child labour in Bangladesh.

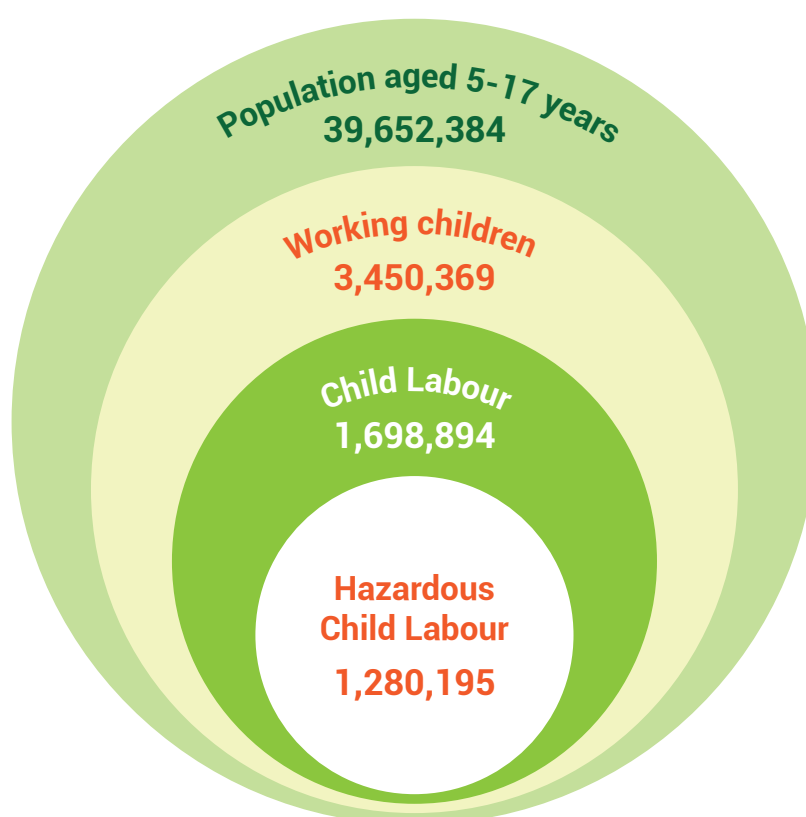


4 Child labour situation in Bangladesh

4.1 Intensity of Child Labour in Bangladesh

According to the ILO (2017),⁷ almost half of the world's 900 million extremely poor population is made up of children. Poverty has led many children to become involved in income-generating work at an early age. The situation is not different in Bangladesh. Even after the introduction of various programmes, Bangladesh still has a significant number of children engaged in child labour and faces numerous challenges in eliminating child labour.

Figure 1: Number of working children and child labour in Bangladesh, 2013



Source: National Child Labour Survey, 2013

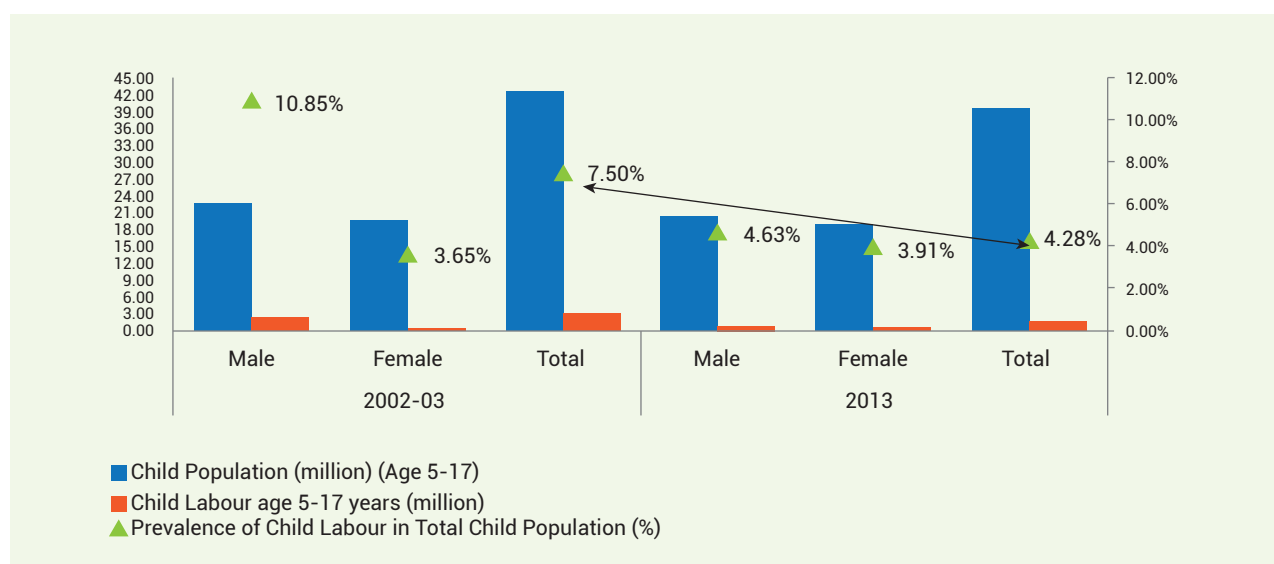


⁷ ILO: World Social Protection Report 2017-19: *Universal social protection to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals* (2017).

According to the Child Labour Survey Bangladesh 2013,⁸ of the 3.45 million working children aged between 5 and 17 years, 1.70 million are engaged in child labour,⁹ which is about 4.30 per cent of the entire child population and 49.3 per cent of working children. It was estimated that one out of every six children in Bangladesh is working (Save The Children, 2014). Child labour also includes 1.28 million children involved in hazardous work (Figure 1).

Figure 2 compares statistics of child population and child labour obtained from the Child Labour Surveys 2002–03 and 2013. It is noted that even though the number of children engaged in child labour has declined significantly over the period 2002 to 2013 (about 46.5 per cent), the country still has a larger number of children engaged in child labour working in different sectors of the economy. The figure also shows that the number of girls involved in child labour did not decline as much as the number of boys in child labour during the period 2002 to 2013. Surprisingly, the proportion of girls involved in child labour out of the total number of children involved in child labour increased from 23 per cent to 44 per cent over the period. Accordingly, the prevalence of female child labour in the total child population increased from 3.65 per cent to 3.91 per cent, while the prevalence of boys decreased from 10.85 per cent to 4.63 per cent over the period.

Figure 2: Statistics of child labour in Bangladesh



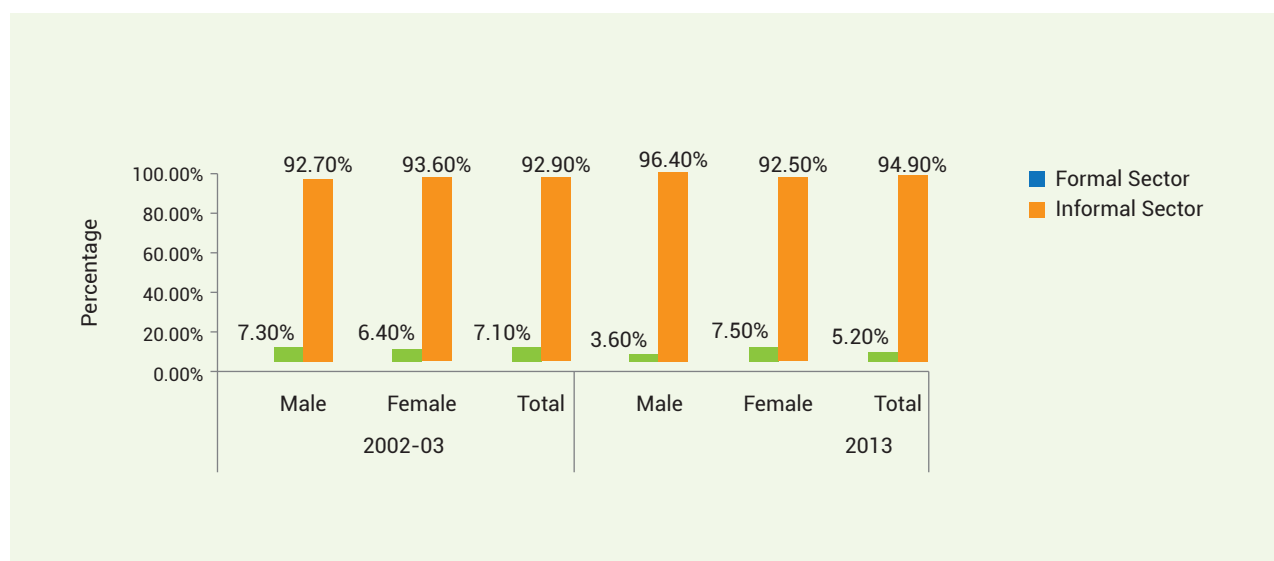
Source: Bangladesh Child Labour Surveys, 2002-03 and 2013

Figure 3 presents information on child labour and working children by broad sector of employment. The figure shows that as of 2013 about 95 per cent of working children are engaged in the informal sector, a similar scenario as in 2002–03. These statistics together with the statistics of the previous figure imply that most of the child labour is found in the informal sector, where there is a high possibility of abuses, hazards and non-compliance. In addition, more female children are employed in the informal sector than their male counterparts.

⁸ Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics with support from International Labour Organization (ILO): *Child Labour Survey* (Bangladesh, 2013).

⁹ The remaining of the working children are not involved in child labour according to the definition.

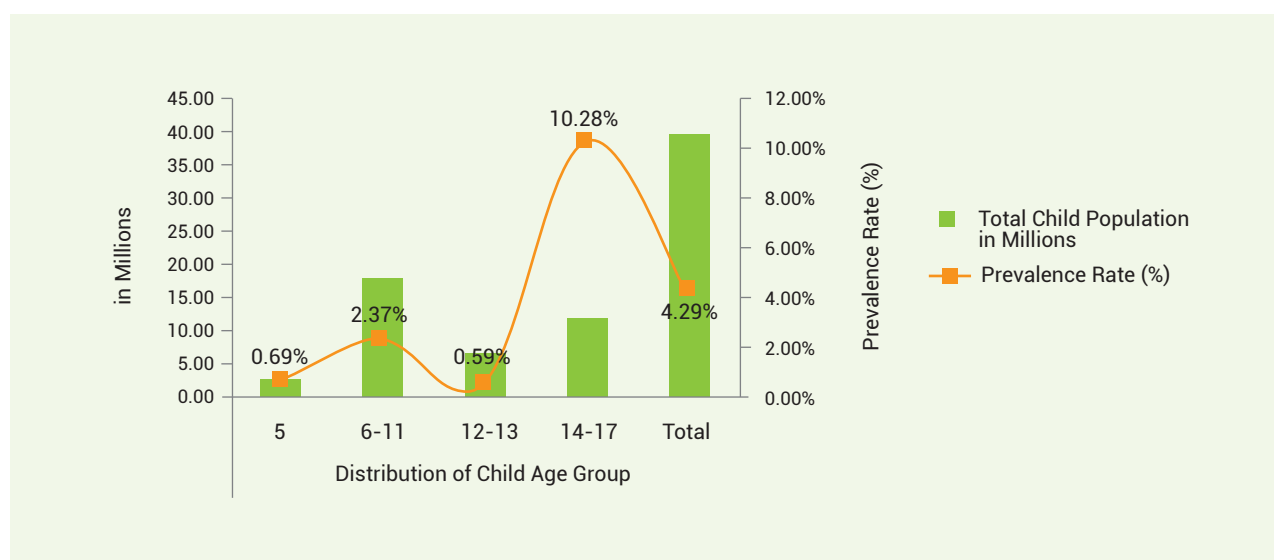
Figure 3: Working children in formal and informal sectors



Source: Bangladesh Child Labour Surveys, 2002-03 and 2013

Figure 4 shows the distribution of child labour in the age group of 5 to 17 years. Of the four age groups that are shown in figure 3, the age group of 14-17 years has the highest number of children involved in child labour, which amounts to about 1.21 million. The prevalence rate of child labour is also highest in this group.¹⁰ This indicates probable dropout of children from school, along with higher pressure on the children in their late childhood to join the labour market where they have to work more than the hours permitted by the labour law.

Figure 4: Prevalence of child labour in different age groups



Source: Bangladesh Child Labour Survey 2013

¹⁰ Prevalence Rate of Child Labour = (Number of Child Labour/ Total Child Population) × 100.

According to the Bangladesh Child Labour Force Survey, about 1.28 million children are engaged in hazardous work, which accounts for about 37.10 per cent of the total number of working children in 2013 (Table 1). Once again, surprisingly, the female children found in hazardous work as a percentage of working children aged 5 to 17 years increased significantly over the period 2003 to 2013; it increased more for female children as compared to male children from 6.15 per cent to 37.71 per cent, indicating a higher employment rate of girls in the informal sector.

Table 1: Children in hazardous work as percentage of child labour and working children aged 5 to 17 years

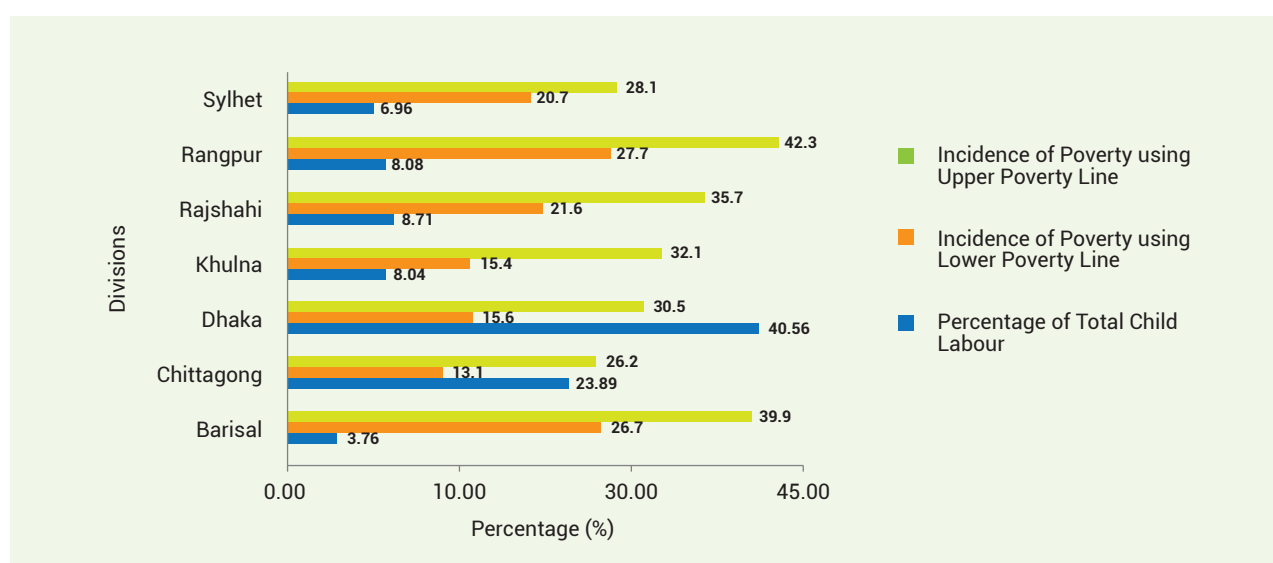
Characteristics	2002-03			2013		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Children in hazardous work as percentage of child labour (%)	47.62%	16.71%	40.61%	81.01%	68.10%	75.34%
Children in hazardous work as percentage of working children (%)	21.42%	6.15%	17.39%	36.71%	37.71%	37.10%

Source: Calculated from Bangladesh Child Labour Survey 2013, p.177. (source data for this table is added in Annex IV).

4.2 Reasons behind children becoming involved in child labour in Bangladesh: What factors drive children to work?

Both theoretical and empirical studies suggest that economic vulnerability associated with poverty, risk and shocks plays a key role in driving children to work (ILO 2013). Child labour is not an isolated issue explained by poverty alone; it is a phenomenon which is a combined product of many factors that bridge traditional policy boundaries. As poverty is not the only cause of child labour, a policy response focused only on poverty reduction is therefore unlikely to be successful.

Figure 5: Incidence of poverty and percentage of child labour by divisions



Source: Child Labour Survey 2013, Bangladesh Economic Review 2017

Figure 5 depicts that child labour could be high even in the regions where poverty is relatively low. Percentage of child labour is highest in the Dhaka and Chittagong divisions while the incidence of poverty is highest in the Rangpur, Barisal and Rajshahi divisions. This can be explained by the internal migration that takes place from the poverty-stricken *upazilas* of these divisions to the cities in Dhaka and Chittagong. A study by Rahmana and Rana, (2016),¹¹ states that seasonal migration of the extreme poor from the southwest creates problems in children's education as the entire household migrates to brick kilns before the end of the school year. Moreover, every year, half a million new people arrive in urban areas (World Bank, 2016) from the rural districts not only because of poverty but also as victims of different natural disasters and loss of land and jobs due to climate change affecting their locality. Thus, the share of urban poor is rising, many of the poverty-stricken migrants often ending up in illegal settlements on precarious land with poor living conditions. According to UNICEF (2010), the rate of birth registration in slums is about half of the national average; school dropout and repetition rates are higher; and additionally, slums have three times more child labour (13 per cent) than the average.¹² The nature of urban poverty may be different from the challenges and issues in rural areas: poor living conditions, often without a stable supply of water, sanitation, and electricity, are a big concern for urban poor families. Children, in particular, end up in different types of jobs as the wage of child labour is higher in these areas with higher work opportunity (wage of working children per month is BDT 6 952 in City Corporations), supported by a higher living cost that induces the families to send children to work.

In Bangladesh both the “push” and “pull” factors are at play taking children out of school and compelling them to become child labourers. Zaman et al. (2014) have noted a number of factors that “push” children out of school which include poor quality education, lack of relevancy in lessons, language used, physical accessibility issues and the absence of school in the child's community. According to this study, the pull for children to engage in child labour involves economic and other issues associated with poverty that pull children out of school. Prevailing societal attitudes are tolerant of child labour and there is little incentive for households to invest in children's education as there are few decent work opportunities for young people graduating from school; these also contribute to the pull of children out of school (World Report on Child Labour 2013). About 63 per cent of children involved in child labour are not currently attending school and 8.4 per cent never attended school (Child Survey 2013, p.75). Also, in the age group of 14 to 17 years about 1.21 million children are engaged in child labour and only 19.6 per cent of them are currently attending school. Because families often depend on their children to earn and contribute additional income, they accept child labour under unavoidable circumstances (Figure 6).

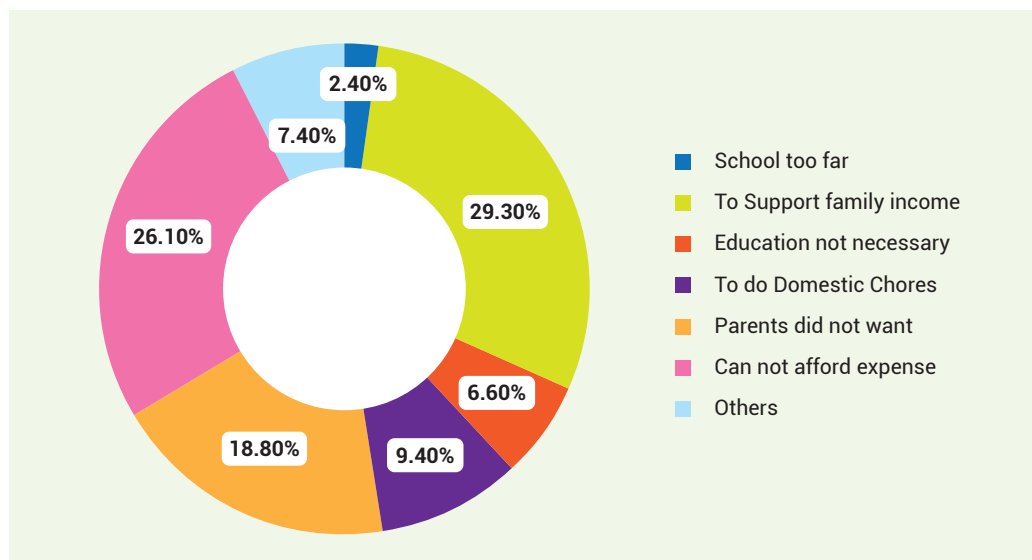
According to the Child Labour Survey (2013, p.78), in addition to economic causes (such as “cannot afford expenses” or “to support family income”) there are cultural (such as “to do domestic chores”, which relates to patriarchal division of labour) and attitudinal causes (such as “education not necessary” or “parents did not want”) affecting school attendance by the children. However, the attitudinal factor, “parents did not want”, is noted to be prevalent for very young children (65 per cent of children in child labour who are 5 years old, and 46 per cent of children between the ages of 6 and 11). This attitude could be explained by the fact that parents do not consider education to be necessary from an early age. Moreover, this attitude is by far the most prevalent for female children.

11 A K M Fazlur Rahman and Sohel Rana: *Migration and its effect on extreme poor households' trajectories*, July 2016, Working Paper 32, EEP/Shiree.

12 UNICEF: *Understanding Urban Inequalities in Bangladesh: A Prerequisite for Achieving Vision 2021* (United Nations Children's Fund, Dhaka, Bangladesh, 2010).

Of the 55,697 girls involved in child labour who were not admitted into school, 40.4 per cent reported that their parents did not want it. This attitude is seen to be less prevalent as concerns children older than 11 years. However, there is no information as to whether the parents who did not want their children younger than 11 years old to go to school change their attitude when those children grow up.

Figure 6: Distribution of child labour by causes why they never attended schools



Source: Child Labour Survey, 2013

Although children are not supposed to engage in the labour market, livelihood failure pushes them to participate in it. By earning an income, working children try to reduce the livelihood crisis of their family thereby reducing vulnerability to economic shocks. After conducting several studies Save the Children (2014) inferred that children who work often belong to households that are chronically poor, or slide into poverty due to shock or stress stemming from events such as illness, accident and marital breakdown. In addition, such households are often quick to resort to child labour and do not consider alternative ways of ensuring children's long-term educational needs and rights at a time of household stress. While household poverty is a key driver of child labour in Bangladesh, social acceptance and demand for child workers by employers are also principal factors making it difficult to break this trend (Save the Children, 2014).

The types of hazardous sectors in which children are engaged on a significant scale, mainly include manufacturing (33.3 per cent), agriculture, forestry and fishing (29.9 per cent), wholesale and retail (10.6 per cent) and construction (6.9 per cent) (Child Labour Survey, 2013, p.62). The national average of monthly salary/average earned by working children is BDT 5 501 in rural areas, BDT 6 057 in urban areas and BDT 6 952 in City Corporations (Child Labour Survey 2013, p.57); this income varies between different age groups. According to the most up-to-date HIES report, the Household Income per Month data of Bangladesh average wage of child labour was recorded at 15 945.00 BDT in Dec 2016.¹³ Hence, a working child can contribute to one third of a household's income. Other common reasons that pull children to engage in child labour include the non-payment of minimal wages to the parents, high unemployment among adults, the need to pay off family debt and to meet

¹³ <https://www.ceicdata.com/en/bangladesh/household-income-and-expenditure-survey-household-income-per-month/hies-household-income-per-month>.

their own survival needs if they are fending for themselves. These causes call for direct and indirect intervention by the social protection system of the country.

4.3 Policies and regulations to combat child labour in Bangladesh

While child labour is quite widespread in Bangladesh, it also appears that there are a number of policies and regulations to combat the issue.

Table 2: Key policies related to address the issue of child labour¹⁴

Policies	Description
National Child Labour Elimination Policy 2010	The policy advocates a friendly world for the children engaged in work and provides a standard framework concerning education, health, working environment, specific working conditions, recreation, treatment, and security, social awareness building for managing and reducing risks of child abuse by employers.
Child Labour National Plan of Action (2012-2016)	Identified strategies for developing institutional capacity, increasing access to education and health services, raising social awareness, strengthening law enforcement, and creating prevention and reintegration programmes.
Domestic Workers Protection and Welfare Policy	Sets the minimum age for domestic work at 14 years; however, children between the ages of 12 and 13 can work as domestic workers with parental permission but this is not legally enforceable.
National Plan of Action to Combat Human Trafficking (2015-2017)	Establishes goals to meet international standards and best practices for anti-human-trafficking initiatives, including prevention of human trafficking; protection and legal justice for victims of human trafficking; development of advocacy networks; and establishment of an effective monitoring, evaluation, and reporting mechanism.
National Education Policy	Specifies the Government's education policy, including pre-primary, primary, secondary, vocational and technical, higher, and non-formal education policies.
Seventh Five Year Plan (2016-2020)	Includes the elimination of the worst forms of child labour, with a focus on child domestic workers and other vulnerable groups. Sets out actions to be taken by the Government, including forming a policy for children working in the formal sector, providing assistance to street children to protect them from exploitation, coordinating the Government and other stakeholders for effective rehabilitation, increasing working children's access to formal and non-formal learning, and providing livelihood support to poor households with children. Approved in 2015 and launched in 2016.
Other policies which may have implications for child labour	Bangladesh Labour Act 2006; Criminal Laws with regard to the use of children in pornography, drugs dealing or arms business; Women Development Policy 2011 especially for encouraging female children to go to school.

¹⁴ The Government has other policies that may have addressed child labour issues or had an impact on child labour.

The Children Act 2013 repealed the previous Children Act 1974 which was inconsistent with international standards, particularly with the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, 1989. Section 4 of this new Act provides that, notwithstanding anything contained in any other law in force for the time being, every person shall be deemed to be a child who is below the age of 18 years. Though there is no specific provision prohibiting child labour, it forbids and punishes some serious offenses against children including the exploitation of children. Chapter 3 of the Labour ACT, 2006 contains clauses on the prohibition and restricted allowance of the employment of children and adolescents. However, this Act does not provide any guidance on the informal employment of children.



5 Social protection or social safety-net programmes as a policy response to reduce child labour: Evidence from different countries

In the previous sections it was discussed that the combination of persistent poverty and income volatility can render households more vulnerable to child labour. Accordingly, different kinds of social protection instruments can mitigate the economic vulnerabilities associated with child labour. Usually the focus of the safety-net programmes is to protect people from falling below a certain poverty level and compensate the vulnerable groups in the society to cope with adverse income fluctuations for a variety of risks and shocks, such as accidents, frictional unemployment illness, floods, cyclone, price inflation etc.

As coping mechanisms to deal with these shocks, households may decide to pull school-age children out of school, reduce or even cancel planned investment in productive ventures or maintenance of current business assets, increase utilization of free-access community resources (such as forest products, fisheries), or engage in distress selling of productive assets such as land. These activities adversely affect not only future earning potential but also investment in human capital generation and thus aggravate the possibility of inter-generational transmission of poverty (ILO, 2013). Apparently, in rural Bangladesh households will induce the children (especially, among 14 to 17-year olds) into income generating activities, cutting the education expenditure and contributing to the household income.¹⁵ If there are effective and sustainable social safety-net programmes, those will enable individuals and households to avoid making livelihood choices that reduce their earnings, and help households to take up investment opportunities that they would otherwise miss. These programmes will support the households in capital accumulation and will also prevent the negative outcomes of malnutrition.

In a number of countries cash and in-kind transfer programmes directed at families with children are becoming an increasingly important part of social protection floors. These programmes can be either conditional or unconditional: that is, some of them require households to fulfill certain conditions on household activities in order to qualify for benefits, or they can make these benefits available to all who meet only the income or other eligibility criteria.¹⁶

¹⁵ Described elaborately in section 4.1 The national average of monthly salary/average earned by working children per month is BDT 5 501 in rural areas, BDT 6 057 in urban areas and BDT 6 952 in City Corporations (Child Labour Survey 2013, p57).

¹⁶ ILO: World Report on Child Labour: *Economic vulnerability, social protection and the fight child labour* (2013).

Impacts of different social safety-net programmes appear to be different. The study by Schady and Araujo (2006) analysed the income transfer programmes in Ecuador to households in the poorest two quintiles of the population and found that roughly one year after the start of the programme, children aged between 6 and 17 years in beneficiary households were six percentage points less likely to participate in paid or unpaid economic activities than children in the control group. The study on the impact of Mexico's Conditional Cash Transfers on Child Labour (Oportunidades) by Skoufias and Parker (2001, as cited in ILO 2013), noted that the programme significantly reduced child labour among 12 to 17-year-old boys and girls but not among younger boys and girls. The Conditional Cash Transfers appear more successful in getting children into school though the magnitude may vary with relatively lesser impact when there is a higher intensity of child labour.

Conditional in-kind programmes are also found to be fruitful for increasing the numbers of children who are shifted from work to school. For example, the school feeding programmes or take-home rations to students provide students with a meal during school hours (typically breakfast or lunch) and thus automatically enforce a schooling condition. The study by Ravallion and Wodon (2000, cited in ILO 2013) found that the take-home rations distributed to school children in Bangladesh reduced child participation in economic activities and in household chores.

Public employment programmes also have the potential to reduce households' reliance on child labour as these programmes create employment opportunities for adults. The impact evaluation study by Hoddinott et al. (2009, cited in ILO, 2013) on Public Safety-Net Programmes in Ethiopia, found some evidence of significant reduction in working hours by boys aged 6 to 10 years in the beneficiary households. Positive impacts on reducing child labour are also observed as a result of social health protection programmes for the poor, social protection for people with disabilities, programmes for income security in old age, unemployment protection etc. (discussed elaborately in ILO, 2013).



6 Social safety-net programmes of Bangladesh: At a glance

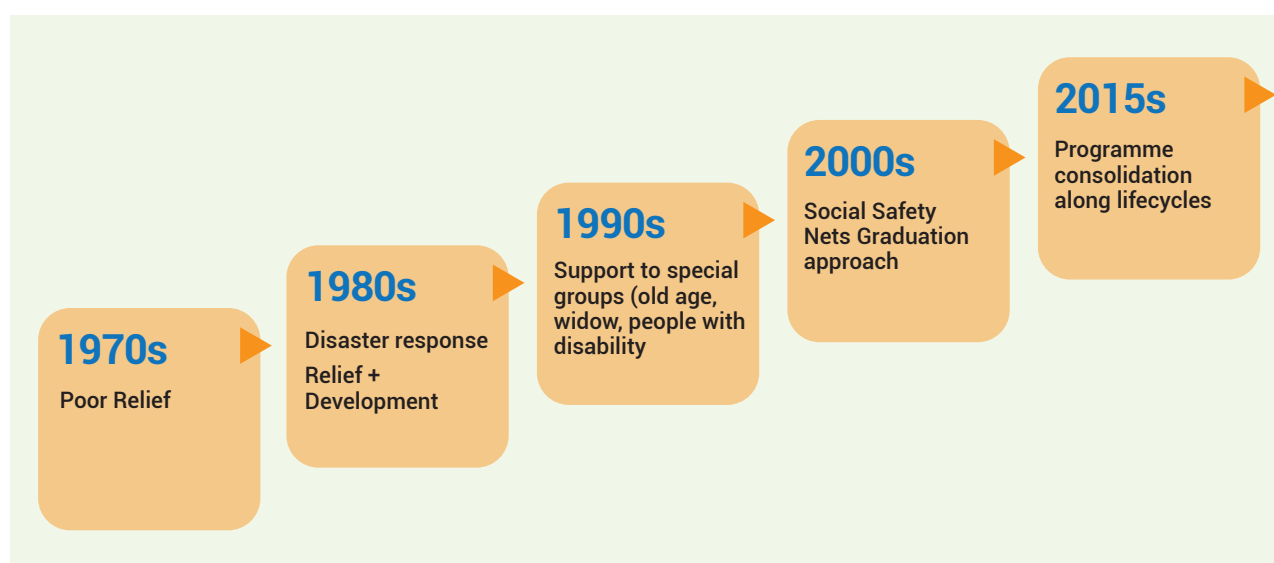
6.1 Importance and relevance

According to the World Social Protection Report by ILO (2017), social protection plays a key role in achieving sustainable development, promoting social justice and realizing the human right to social security for all. This report has also noted that transfers for children and families, in cash or in kind, are critical for realizing children's rights by preventing them from falling into poverty, preventing child mortality, contributing to their healthy development and well-being, improving their access to essential goods and services, and reducing child labour. Social protection thus ensures that children can realize their full potential and enjoy an adequate standard of living. Therefore, as seen above in Section 2, ILO Recommendation No. 202 asserts that a state should establish and maintain a nationally defined Social Protection Floor (SPF), comprising basic social security guarantees to secure protection aimed at preventing or alleviating poverty, vulnerability and social exclusion. In a country like Bangladesh aiming to become a developing country by 2024, where child labour is vastly visible in both rural and urban areas, it is crucial to address the child labour issue in order to ensure sustainable human capital for development.

6.2 Evolution of social protection in Bangladesh

Bangladesh has a long history of formal social safety-net programmes, which, in part, has shaped the nature of the current social security system. The political viewpoints and programme designs of social protection in Bangladesh have gradually evolved from a poor-relief approach in the 70's to a safety-net approach in the late 90's and finally to a lifecycle framework in 2015 with the adoption of the National Social Security Strategy.

Figure 7: Evolution of social protection in Bangladesh



Source: Adapted from Hasan (2017)

The decade of the 1980s has been characterized by disaster response and relief operations. The component of development in addition to providing food heralded a remarkable improvement in the social protection programmes during that period. Throughout the 1990s, programmes were undertaken to provide support to special population groups such as old age, widows and people with disability. These programmes were often supported by the development partners and NGOs. The provision of cash transfers was widely introduced in these programmes. In the 2000s, numerous social safety-net programmes were undertaken to support different types of risks and vulnerabilities. These programmes were often reinforced with graduation programmes to bring the poor sustainably out of poverty (Hasan, 2017). The Government's social protection policy must be seen as a core element of the other policies and programmes that together comprise the broader social development framework (SDF). The main objective of the SDF is to have a comprehensive and consistent set of policies that can help Bangladesh achieve better equity and social justice in the context of its development effort.

This focus of the SDF is to be achieved through a range of policies and programmes encompassing the Government's

- ❖ Poverty reduction strategy
- ❖ Education strategy
- ❖ Health, nutrition and population strategy
- ❖ Strategy for sanitation and water supply
- ❖ Strategy for inclusive finance
- ❖ Strategy for women and gender empowerment
- ❖ Strategy for social inclusion of ethnic and religious minorities
- ❖ Strategy for environmental protection and climate change management
- ❖ Strategy for disaster management and social protection strategy

These various strategies and programmes are mostly complimentary in nature and tend to strengthen the impact on poverty reduction, reduce vulnerability of the poor and promote social cohesion. Against the backdrop of the experiences with non-cohesive social protection or social safety-net programmes prior to the adoption of the NSSS, the government planned to undertake target-oriented programmes to address the following priority challenges:

- ❖ Expanding coverage of core schemes for the most vulnerable members of society, focusing on children, the elderly and people with disabilities.
- ❖ Ensuring that the most vulnerable women are provided with income security and greater opportunities to engage in the labour market, in particular as they enter into motherhood.
- ❖ Initiating a social insurance system that enables people to invest in their own social security, providing protection against the risks of old age, disability, unemployment and maternity.
- ❖ Expanding coverage to the residents of urban areas and to socially excluded people.
- ❖ Ensuring that the social protection system supports an effective disaster response system.
- ❖ Strengthening the delivery systems for priority transfers by establishing advanced management information systems and professional staff.

The government has also considered the fact that achieving the SDGs would require the adoption of various social protection or social empowerment programmes which will be explicitly required to achieve the following goals and targets of the SDGs:

Table 3: The mentioning of social protection in SDGs

Goals:	Targets:
Goal 1: End poverty in all its forms everywhere	Target 1.3 - Implement nationally appropriate social protection systems and measures for all, including floors, and by 2030 achieve substantial coverage of the poor and the vulnerable.
Goal 3: Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages	Target 3.8 - Achieve universal health coverage, including financial risk protection, access to quality essential health-care services and access to safe, effective, quality and affordable essential medicines and vaccines for all.
Goal 5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls	Target 5.4 - Recognize and value unpaid care and domestic work through the public provision of public services, infrastructures and social protection policies and the promotion of shared responsibility within the household and the family as nationally appropriate.
Goal 8: Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all.	Target 8.5 - By 2030, achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all women and men, including for young people and persons with disabilities, and equal pay for work of equal value.
Goal 10: Reduce inequality within and among countries	Target 10.4 - Adopt policies, especially fiscal, wage and social protection policies, and progressively achieve greater equality.

It is to be noted that Goals 3 and 8 do not directly mention social protection targets, but are included because health coverage (Goal 3) is a social protection measure and social protection is one of the four pillars of 'decent work' (Goal 8).

As has been mentioned above, Bangladesh has adopted the lifecycle approach¹⁷ to social protection in the National Social Security Strategy and various risks have been identified for different cohorts of life. Social protection programmes of Bangladesh before adopting the NSSS in 2015, were complex and the leakage rate was very high (Planning Commission, 2015). Though 65 per cent of the programmes were seeking to address life-cycle risks, there were significant gaps. For example, social security coverage for children of 0-4 years was very limited; though coverage for school-age children was highest but the transfer they used to receive was low in value.

Though NSSS has taken a comprehensive approach to provide social protection, Bangladesh's social security system remains complex, comprising a large number of programmes and managed by 25 ministries/divisions. There are 130 programmes under the social security system currently financed through the budget (according to National Budget Documents of FY 2018-19). The number of beneficiaries (either in terms of man month or number of persons) and the amount of financial allocation for existing social safety-net programmes is noted in Annex I. The government has categorized the social safety-net programmes in two broad categories – programmes for social protection and programmes for social empowerment.

The Government of Bangladesh has increased budgetary allocations in social safety-net programmes over the last couple of years. The trend of budgetary allocations for these programmes in absolute terms, as well as a share of national budget allocation has increased in recent years. The absolute allocation for SSNPs has increased from BDT 230.98 billion in FY 2012-13 to BDT 641.77 billion in FY 2018-19. The share of SSNPs in the GDP has increased marginally in the last five years with some decline in the GDP share during the FY15 to FY17 period. It has gone up from 2.22 per cent of the GDP in FY 2012-13 to 2.53 per cent in FY 2018-19. The share in total budget expenditure has increased from 12.2 per cent in FY 2012-13 to 13.8 per cent in FY 2018-19. With regard to the component-specific allocation of SSNPs, the allocation for programmes for social protection has dominated in all periods as compared to the those for social empowerment. In the FY 2018-19, the government has allocated 9.52 per cent of its total SSNPs budget for the social protection programmes compared to 2.72 per cent to programmes for social empowerment (Table 3). However, the table in Annex I depicts that the number of programmes is much higher under social empowerment (93 programmes) than the number of programmes under social protection (37 programmes). This indicates that programmes under social empowerment are (on an average) smaller in size both in terms of allocation and number of beneficiaries. Most of these programmes come under the wider development programmes of the government. However, both the empowerment and protection programmes are necessary for

17 Families are vulnerable to a range of crises, such as ill health or covariate shocks like natural disasters or economic recessions. These risks are faced by individuals across the lifecycle, from birth to old age. The current NSSS strategy is to reduce the types of risks and challenges that people in Bangladesh could face across the lives. Individual risks also impact on others in the family, household and, indeed, broader kinship and social networks. So, for example, parents losing employment has significant impacts on the well-being of their children and any other relatives – such as their own parents – for whom they have care responsibilities. (Source: <http://socialprotection.gov.bd/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/NSSS-Background-Inner-Final-15.07.2017-8-pm.pdf>). This approach takes account of various risks faced in different cohorts of life and design programmes to address those diversities of risks. This approach calls for providing attention to the needs of a human being when they are in the womb of mother until they die. According to the lifecycle approach, there should be programmes for pregnant mothers of poor families, for infants, for toddlers, children, adolescents, youths, and so on. Such approach can eliminate the possibilities of inter-generational poverty as well as the elimination of child labour on a sustainable basis.

addressing the child labour issue. While protection programmes like Vulnerable Group Feeding, or Old-Age Allowance can directly serve to increase household incomes and thereby extend positive impacts to reduce child labour, the social empowerment programmes, which are to a large extent development programmes, have the capability to generate long term and structural impacts on the reduction of child labour. The social empowerment programmes such as stipend programmes for children or Rural Infrastructure Development have the capacity to generate multiple impacts at the household level and generate sustainable advancement in both poverty reduction and the reduction of child labour.

Table 4: Allocation of national budget in programmes for social protection and programmes for social empowerment

Year	Social Protection			Social Empowerment			Total Safety Net		
	BDT in Billion	% of Budget	% of GDP	BDT in Billion	% of Budget	% of GDP	BDT in Billion	% of Budget	% of GDP
2012-13	174,800	9.23	1.68	56,180	2.97	0.54	230,980	12.2	2.22
2013-14	189,840	8.78	1.61	76,700	3.55	0.65	266,540	12.33	2.26
2014-15	215,290	8.98	1.42	91,060	3.8	0.6	306,360	12.78	2.02
2015-16	252,640	9.55	1.46	107,110	4.05	0.62	359,750	13.6	2.08
2016-17	305,830	9.64	1.56	102,740	3.24	0.53	408,570	12.88	2.09
2017-18	287,960	7.75	1.29	197,270	5.31	0.88	485,240	13.06	2.17
2018-19 (Proposed)	442,070	9.52	1.74	199,680	4.30	0.79	641,770	13.81	2.53

Source: National budget documents, Ministry of Finance, Bangladesh

Among the programmes only a few dominate in terms of allocation and beneficiaries. Out of the 130 SSNPs listed in the budget document of 2018–19, ten programmes constitute 63 per cent of the total budget allocation for social safety net programmes (Table 4). These top-ten programmes (in terms of allocation in FY19) include three programmes for social empowerment and seven for social protection. The programme with the top allocation under SSNP (35 per cent of total allocation for SSNP) is the programme for the Pension for Retired Government Employees and their families. This includes all government employees including the top-grade employees. Thus, a large part of the safety-net programmes is actually serving ex-government employees who do not belong to the poor segment of the society (explained further in Box-1).

Table 5: Top ten social safety-net programmes according to the allocation in budget 2018-19

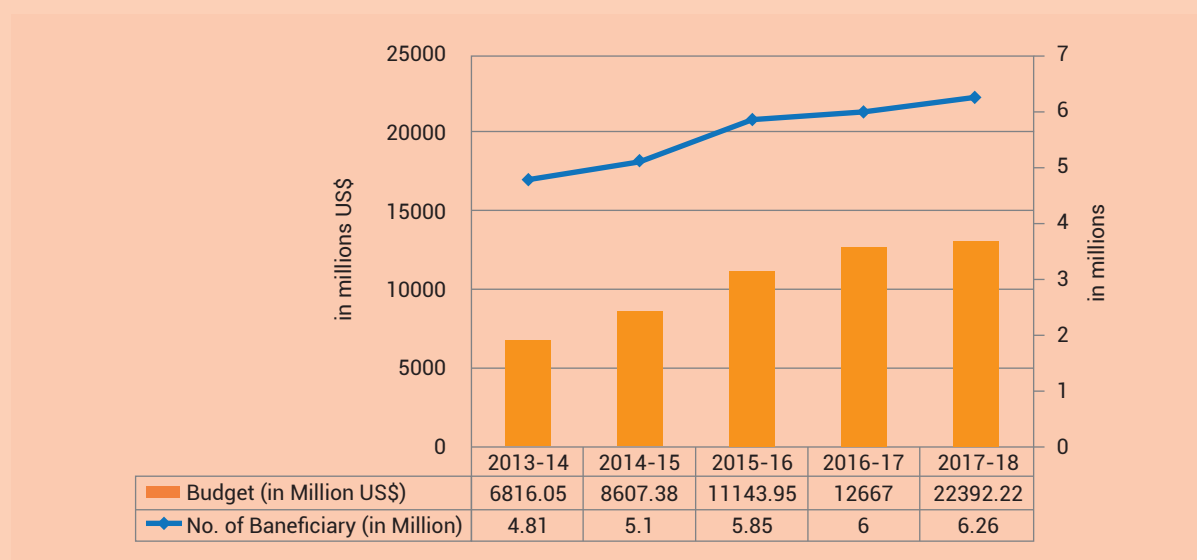
Sl. No.	Programme	Budget (BDT in million)	Allocation as % of Total safety net Budget	Type of programme
1	Pension for Retired Government Employees and their Families	226,394.6	35.28	Social protection (cash transfer)
2	Honorarium for Freedom Fighters	33,050	5.15	Social protection (cash transfer)
3	Rural Infrastructure Development	32,420	5.05	Social empowerment (Development sector programme)
4	Old-Age Allowance	24,000	3.74	Social protection (cash transfer)
5	Vulnerable Group Feeding (VGF)	17,310	2.70	Social protection (Food security programme)
6	Vulnerable Group Development (VGD) (in man month)	16,850	2.63	Social protection (Food security programme)
7	Employment Generation Programme for the Poor (in man month)	16,500	2.57	Social protection (Food security programme)
8	Primary School Stipend	15,500	2.42	Social empowerment (Development sector programme)
9	Test Relief (TR) Cash	13,900	2.17	Social protection (Food security programme)
10	Development Support for Special Needs	11,270	1.76	Social empowerment (Development sector programme)
Total Top 10 programme		40,7190	63.45	
Total safety net budget		64,1770	100	



Box-1: Pension Scheme for the government employee: is it a social safety net for non-poor?

The programme with the top allocation under SSNP (35 per cent of the total allocation for SSNP in FY 2018–19) is the programme of Pension for Retired Government Employees and their families (upon death of the employee). This includes all government employees including the top-grade employees. According to the National Pay Scale-2015, a government employee of the lowest category pay scale, Grade-20 will be paid a minimum of 3 000 BDT per month as individual or lifetime family pension (Bangladesh Gazette, December 2015). This is on top of the large amount (most commonly 60 per cent of the 238 months' salary according to the last salary received) she/he receives immediately after retirement. According to the Household Income and Expenditure Survey (HIES) 2016, the upper poverty line income per person is 2 268 BDT taka per month, which is lower than the minimum payable pension. Thus, even the minimum pension-receiving person earns more than the poverty-line income for the individual. If we consider individual level income, then none of the pension receiving person is poor. Hence, it can be concluded that a large part of the safety-net programmes is actually serving ex-government employees who can by no means be categorized as poor, some of them even belong to the upper middle class to middle class section of the community.

Figure B-1: Pension for retired government employees and their families



Source: On the basis of the data at <http://socialprotection.gov.bd/pension-for-retired-government-employees-and-their-families/> (as cited on 2 September, 2018)

The above figure depicts the rapid increase in pension expenditure and the beneficiaries in the last five years. Also, pension as a percentage of total non-development expenditure of the country in fiscal year 2017–18 increased to 9.40 per cent.

Most of the safety-net budget (51 per cent) goes for cash transfer programmes whether meant for social protection or social empowerment programmes (Table 6). Development programmes also constitute a large share of the social safety-net budget.

Table 6: Allocation for different kinds of social safety-net programmes and their share in the total safety net budget (FY2018-19)

Sector of Social safety- net programmes	Total number of programmes	Number of Social Protection programmes	Budget for Social Protection (BDT in million)	Number of Social Empowerment programmes	Budget for Social Empowerment (BDT in million)	Total Safety net Budget (BDT in million)	% of a type of programme in Total Safety net budget
Cash transfer	22	16	32,3190	6	4,640	32,7830	51.08
Food Security programme	10	10	10,4570		-	10,4570	16.29
Micro-Credit Programmes/ Miscellaneous fund	25	11	1,4310	14	1,5060	2,9370	4.58
Development Sector	73			73	17,9990	17,9990	28.05
Total Programmes	130	37	44,2070	93	19,9700	64,1770	100

If we look at SSNPs, it is noted that a number of programmes are either dedicated to social protection or to social empowerment, and can directly or indirectly contribute to the elimination of child labour (discussed below). It is noted that the programmes for social protection take the following forms: cash transfer, food security, and miscellaneous fund allocation. Programmes for social empowerment take the following forms: cash transfer, micro-credit, and miscellaneous fund allocation. In addition, most of the social empowerment programmes are actually carried out under the development budget. Now let us find out how different types of programmes may have a connection with the elimination of child labour from the economy.

Cash transfer programmes

Cash transfer programmes provide cash benefits usually to vulnerable households including widows, deserted and destitute women; maternity allowance for poor women. These include: Stipend for Disabled Students; Grants for the Schools for the Disabled etc. Cash transfers directly to the children improve their welfare and constitute a key element in a comprehensive policy response to child labour. For example:

- ❖ **Primary School Stipend:** The government has been giving a stipend of BDT 30.67 billion from July 2015 to all primary schools to make sure that no child is kept out of school. The number of beneficiaries of stipends has increased from 7.9 million to 13 million (Child-focused Budget, 2018-19, p.25). The money reaches the parents through the schools.
- ❖ **The Higher Secondary Stipend Project:** Under this project 40 per cent of female students and 10 per cent of male students in grade 11/12 are paid stipends, money for purchasing books, filling out forms and meeting tuition fees. The stipend is being provided through Mobile Banking amongst the beneficiaries and they do not need go to the institution or bank to collect the stipend as it can be collected anytime from any place via SMS. It saves both time and money. There is no scope for embezzlement/ misappropriation as the stipend goes directly to the student's mobile account. Money can be kept in the mobile account and can be withdrawn as required (Child-focused Budget, 2018-19, p.41).

Even cash transfers not directed to children but to other family members could extend an indirect positive impact on the welfare of the children. Therefore, if cash transfer programmes could be made conditional with regard to the welfare of the children then safety-net programmes could better contribute to combat child labour (the linkages are discussed in section 5 above). For example, if poverty assessment in view of the determination of a beneficiary of a cash transfer programme were linked to whether or not a poor family has children in their household, children could receive an indirect benefit from that cash transfer programme which would be directed towards another family member such as the mother.

Food security programmes

A number of social security programmes are categorized as food security programmes. The Vulnerable Group Development and the Vulnerable Group Feeding programmes under food security are two big programmes which are meant to support very poor families. The selection process for beneficiaries could consider families with small children thus rendering the programmes more child-friendly allowing them to play a substantial role in reducing child labour. Another important programme in providing food security is the employment generation programme for the poor, which can actually help to combat seasonal pressure on children to become involved in child labour. This support is given during the lean season, so that poor families can get work and earn and support the family.

The School feeding (SF)¹⁸ is another food security programme, which directly helps the children. The Ministry of Primary and Mass Education had experimentally started serving cooked mid-day meals to 11,643 students of 71 schools of Barguna District and 6,260 students of 34 schools in two Unions of Jamalpur District in July 2013. Pre-school and primary school children are served meals comprised of fortified rice and fortified oil, seasonal vegetables and spice that contain 558 kilocalories per meal. The fortified rice is enriched with vitamin A, B1, B12, Folic Acid, Iron and Zinc and the micro-nutrient-enriched oil contains vitamin A, and vitamin D. Children are also made to wash their hands properly before and after the meal and clean their own Tiffin boxes. The ministry believes that this programme is a valuable addition to the government's ever-expanding social safety-net programme and it is contributing in bringing about a qualitative change in primary education. Some of the benefits of this programme are: increasing enrolment and attendance rate, reducing absenteeism and dropout, improving the learning environment, and making students more diligent about studies. It is expected that school feeding as a part of the government's social safety net, will be further strengthened both in terms of allocation and purview, and gradually all primary schools of the country will be brought under this programme.

Moreover, the government is planning to introduce the National School Feeding Policy and to expand its scope to include the private sector and to encourage individual contributions. If implemented, involvement of local people and non-government organizations would be increased and the whole programme would assume a more concerted and inclusive shape. It is expected that the nutritious food supplied in schools will encourage parents to send their children to school rather than involving them in economic activities.

 18 Child-Focused Budget 2018-19, p.26.

Micro-credit programmes under the social safety net

The major programmes under this category are implemented through the Palli Karma Shahayak Foundation (PKSF) or Rural Employment Support Foundation. In FY 2018–19 BDT 2 320 million has been allocated for this programme, which was BDT 780 million in FY 2017–18. This foundation works through different NGOs to channel funds to the rural poor. Many of the programmes for which this micro credit is given take a life-cycle approach. For example, the Enhancing Resources and Increasing Capacities of Poor Households towards Elimination of their Poverty (ENRICH, in Bangla, *Shomriddhi*) programme of PKFS follows a life-cycle approach and supports education and skill development for children where the main objective is to help a poor family to move out of poverty. The education component of this programme primarily seeks to address the problem of dropout of children from primary-level education. The ENRICH Educational Assistance Centres (EACs) are operating in all ENRICH Unions. Here, students of up to Class-II are helped to prepare the next day's school tasks, as there are no facilities nor educational support for many students at their homes. These centres operate from 3:00 pm to 5:00 pm every day except Friday. Children also take part in extra-curricular activities such as recitation of poems, dance, singing etc. The dropout rate among these students, as they move up to Class 3, has on average come down to about 0.092 per cent, while it is about 4–4.5 per cent nationwide.

Development sector programmes under the safety net

A large number of direct programmes for children (including programmes for working and school-going children) are carried out under the development sector programmes. The important ones relevant for addressing child labour are: Primary School Stipend, School Feeding Programme, Reaching Out-of-School Children; Secondary Education Sector Investment Programme; Secondary Education Stipend; Child Protection and Child Welfare; Establishment of a hostel for Government *Shishu Paribar* etc. In addition, many other development programmes for generating employment, such as improving maternal and child health and improving adolescent health have the potential to play an indirect role in addressing child labour. Children and adolescents with better health have a better potential for a better educational performance. The available evidence suggests that extending social health protection is directly relevant to efforts to combat child labour. As has been noted in ILO (2013), evidence from Guatemala and Pakistan indicates that providing families with health insurance can reduce reliance on child labour. Evidence from Kenya suggests that providing access to essential health services can have a similar effect. The next section will further discuss the child-focused programmes carried out under the social safety net.



7 Social safety-net programmes in Bangladesh with a focus on child labour or child population

7.1 Child-focused programmes relevant for combating the problem of child labour

Kidd et al. (2017) have noted different types of risks and challenges that people in Bangladesh could face across their lives including through early childhood and at school age. Hasan (2017) has noted that the risks faced by school-age children include: becoming involved in child labour; facing violence; no access to school; dropping out from school; abuse; malnutrition; loss of parental care from becoming orphan or migration. It follows therefore that becoming engaged in child labour is the most common risk faced by the children of families living in poverty. It is reported that around 47 per cent of households have a child aged between 5 and 18 years. Therefore, school-age children – including those up to 18 years of age – will remain an important population group whose needs must be addressed by social protection. It is noted that the older the children, the higher the probability they will become victims of child labour. Ali (2006, as cited in Kidd et al., 2017) mentioned that around 17.5 per cent of children aged 5 to 17 years are engaged in child labour.

To combat the risks faced by school-age children (6 to 15 years old), the main strategy adopted under the NSSS is to provide a school stipend for all primary and secondary school-going children and support adolescents belonging to households who are vulnerable and live in poverty. The children will also benefit from the school meals programme¹⁹ and disability benefit (if any child has any kind of mental or physical disability). Moreover, the NSSS has maintained the legal provision to ensure that abandoned children get financial support from the responsible parents.²⁰ Most of the children work or are forced to work mainly because of the poverty or financial crisis in their respective households. Some key social safety-net programmes, noted in Table 6, have the potential to extend a direct impact on the elimination of child labour.

19 It has resulted in a high enrollment rate and low dropout. At present, about 33.90 lakh students of all primary schools of 104 upazilas receive 75 grammes of cookies each school day.

20 According to the National Social Security Strategy, 2015, there are an increasing number of children being brought up by one parent, with the other parent not accepting responsibility for their child. Such single parent families are more vulnerable to poverty due to the care responsibilities of the parents, which limit their ability to find work. Yet, both parents should be responsible for the upbringing of their children even if they are unable to co-reside. It is not consistent with our national values that one parent can abandon their responsibilities since this has a major impact on the well-being of their children. The government (mainly the Ministry of Women and Children Affairs) is in the process of developing legislation so that both parents take responsibility for their children.

Table 7: Key social safety-net programmes to address child labour directly

Programme	Description
Urban Social Protection Initiative to Reach the Unreachable and Invisible and Ending Child Labour (2012-2016)	UNICEF, the Ministry of Social Work (MSW), and the Ministry of Women and Children's Affairs (MWCA) 5-year project that provided conditional cash transfers and employment training, outreach and referral services, and social protection services for 500,000 children and 30,000 adolescents.
Stipend programmes for primary and secondary school-going children;	The primary stipend programme is implemented by the Ministry of Primary and Mass Education, the secondary stipend programme is implemented by the Ministry of Education. The coverage for Primary School Stipend is 13 million and for Secondary School Stipend it is 1 million. This is not a universal programme. The target group includes poorest children in primary and secondary schools respectively, with no distinction by gender.
Reaching Out-of- School Children II (2012-2017)	This is a World Bank-funded, 6-year programme that provides out-of-school children with non-formal education, school stipends, free books, and school uniforms. Helps students attend learning centres called Ananda Schools until the students are ready to join mainstream secondary schools. As of June 2016, has provided education to 690,000 poor children in 20,400 learning centres.
Child Sensitive Social Protection Project (2012-2016)	This project aims to reduce abuse, violence, and exploitation of children and youth by improving access to social protection services. Provided conditional cash transfers of \$26 each month for 18 months to underprivileged children to prevent them from working in child labour. Also includes a stipend programme for out- of-school adolescents.
Enabling Environment for Child Rights	MWCA programme, supported by UNICEF, that rehabilitates street children engaged in risky work by withdrawing them from child labour and enrolling them in school. Supports 16,000 children in 20 districts through cash transfers.
Child Help Line 1098	MSW-implemented and UNICEF-supported 24-hour emergency telephone line. Connects children vulnerable to violence, abuse, and exploitation with social protection services. In 2016, was expanded nationwide.
School Feeding programme	This is implemented by the Ministry of Primary and Mass Education. 2.5 million primary school-going children are covered by this programme.
Other programmes	Street Children Rehabilitation Programme, Services for Children at Risk, Child Development Centre, Eradication of Child Labour in Bangladesh

The National Social Security Strategy, 2015 has recognized the needs of children separately and this important national document has given importance to child-focused programmes. From the programmes mentioned above it is evident that the Government of Bangladesh has taken various initiatives to prevent, protect and eliminate all forms of child labour, particularly all forms of hazardous and worst forms of child labour. The Government has also recognized that child labour is a multi-sectoral problem and must be addressed through multi-pronged strategies and approaches. However, most of the existing child labour programmes and activities are education or training-oriented and rehabilitative in nature. These approaches deal with the socially visible aspect of the problems. While many of the problems are rooted in the economic structures of poverty and inequality they need to be addressed through protective measures.

7.2 Impacts of some child-focused safety-net programmes future plans²¹

- ❖ **School feeding programme:** It has resulted in a high enrollment rate and low dropout. At present, about 3.4 million students of all primary schools of 104 upazilas are being distributed 75 grammes of cookies each school day.
- ❖ **Primary school stipend project:** The government has been giving stipend of BDT 30.67 billion from July 2015 to all primary schools to make sure that no child is kept out of school. The number of beneficiaries of stipends has increased from 7.9 million to 13 million (by 2017–18).
- ❖ **Reaching out-of-school children (ROSC) programme:** About 3,10,987 students of 125 Upazilas who previously either didn't go to school or dropped out have the opportunity of going to 11,162 Ananda Schools. A total of 28,500 poor and underprivileged children have the opportunity of being educated in 205 schools and nine technical training centres of 64 districts and 86 Upazilas. The government has spent BDT 360 million for this purpose.
- ❖ **The higher secondary stipend project:** Under this project 40 per cent female students and 10 per cent male students of grade level 11/12 are paid stipends; money used for purchasing books, filling out forms and meeting tuition fees. The stipend is provided through Mobile Banking amongst the beneficiaries and they do not need to go to the institution or bank for collecting the stipends which can be collected anytime from any place via SMS. It saves both time and money. There is no scope for embezzlement/ misappropriation as the stipend goes directly to the student's mobile account. Money can be kept in the mobile account and can be withdrawn as required.
- ❖ **Elimination of hazardous child labour in Bangladesh:** Through this programme, 50,000 children have been saved from hazardous work and were given informal and technical education in the 3rd phase of the project. In the 4th phase each child was given BDT 1 000 per month as assistance. However, it is inadequate since, as was mentioned in Chapter 2 the national average monthly wage of working children is almost BDT 6 170 (combining rural, urban and city corporation wages).

Moreover, the manpower of the Directorate of Inspection for Factories and Establishment has been increased up to 993 in view of strengthening the monitoring of child labour. A child labour branch has been opened under the control and supervision of the labour wing of the Ministry of Labour and Employment under the revenue budget. A draft CSR policy for children has been formulated.

- ❖ Reducing child labour through cash support to mother and vulnerable children under the Ministry of Women and Children Affairs:
 - ◆ Maternity allowance has been provided to 974,000 women over the last three years;
 - ◆ Lactating mother allowance has been provided to 440,000 working women;

21 Based on reports given in the Child-focused Budget 2018–19.

- ♦ 10,690 children were accommodated in 93 Day Care Centres;
 - Cash assistance of BDT 2 000 per month has been provided to 90,000 vulnerable children and adolescents in 20 districts under the Enabling Environment for Child Rights (EECR) project;
- ♦ Throughout the six existing child development centres (Azimpur, Keraniganj, Gazipur, Khulna, Chittagong and Rajshahi) across the country, a total of 750 poor and helpless children have been given full social benefits to ensure their rights.

7.3 Financing child-focused social safety-net programmes

Allocation for various child-focused programmes can be noted from the table below.

Table 8: Allocation of national budget in social safety nets relating to child population or child labour

Programme/ Activities in social safety net programme	Budget (BDT in million)							Current Beneficiaries
	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19 (P)	
Street Children Rehabilitation Programme			0	20	32	35	40	0.02 Man month in FY2018-19
Enabling Environment for Child Rights		606	400	234	219	0	0	---- (no longer continuing)
Services for Children at Risk		107	277	221	0.1	0	0	----(no longer continuing)
Child Sensitive Social Protection in Bangladesh	131	161	201	1213	72.5	0	0	---(no longer continuing)
Child Development Centre	30	32	45	45	48	53	58	0.03 Man month in 2018-19. Through 6 child development centres, a total of 750 poor and helpless children have been given full social benefits.
Primary School Stipend	9,250	8,525	9,400	14,000	14,000	14,500	15,500	14.3 million persons in 2018-19
School Feeding Programmes	4,565	5,155	4,548	5,078	5,401	4,842	6,710	About 2.5 million students are being distributed 75 grammes of cookies in each school day. (the coverage was 3.5 million in FY 2017-18).
Reaching Out-of-School children	695.8	1,480	1,655	1,476	1,650	2,240	2,291	0.56 million persons in FY 2018-19. The coverage was 0.31 million children of 125 Upazilas, who got opportunity to go to 11,162 Ananda Schools

Table 8: Allocation of national budget in social safety nets relating to child population or child labour (cont.)

Programme/ Activities in social safety net programme	Budget (BDT in million)							Current Beneficiaries
	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19 (P)	
Secondary Education Sector Investment Programme		400	1,594	3,018	5,713	7,610	6,000	1.88 million in FY 2018-19. A target has been set to provide scientific equipment to 10,000 educational institutions at secondary level in FY 2018-19.
Secondary Education Stipend		2,730	2,185.8	2,450	2,336	2,855	2,000	0.83 million in 2018-19 persons. Total Beneficiaries were 1.72 million in FY 2017-18

Source: Budget Documents from Ministry of Finance and Child Budget FY 2018-19

Allocation for programmes for children are limited apart from those that are school-based (Table 7). Some of the programmes have already ended. The ministerial budgets concerning children (including child labour) reveal that the ministries related to education are the main contributors to child-focused programmes.

Table 9: Child-focused budget as a percentage of total budget of respective ministries (15 Ministries and Divisions selected)

Ministries/Divisions	Budget 2018-19 (%)	Budget 2017-18(%)
Ministry of Primary and Mass Education	99.51	99.31
Technical and Madrasa Education Division	78.06	72.91
Secondary and Higher Education division	71.16	66.77
Medical Education and Family Welfare Division	41.05	39.08
Health Services Division	43.11	38.89
Ministry of Women and Children's Affairs	39.68	35.87
Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief	30.60	27.92
Ministry of Social Welfare	25.17	21.56
Local Government Division	8.84	6.66
Ministry of Labour and Employment	8.86	6.46
Public Security Division	11.34	2.85
Ministry of Information	5.20	0.87
Ministry of Cultural Affairs	19.99	5.04
Ministry of Youth and Sports	11.40	1.66
Law and Justice Division	2.68	0.70
Total (15 ministries)	43.56	41.41

Source: Child-focused Budget 2018-19, p.19

As poverty is the main root cause of child labour, school-based programmes alone are not enough to shift children away from becoming involved in child labour. It is necessary to increase the allocation for supportive programmes including cash transfer programmes for children in extreme poverty. Moreover, cash transfer programmes for various groups (VGD, VGF, for poor mothers etc.) should take into account the child labour issue when determining the beneficiaries. The programmes directed to combat poverty can prevent child labour by enhancing the coping strengths of families who are faced with economic and social vulnerabilities due to poverty, risks, shocks and deprivation. Evaluation of the Food-For-Education Programme in Bangladesh targeting deprived areas by giving 100 kg of rice to households per year showed that it reduced the incidence of child labour by 0.04 per cent and 0.02 per cent for boys and girls respectively (Browne, 2016). Therefore, these programmes could prioritize households who have working children or children under fifteen years of age in order to reduce child labour. Also, the Union Parishad Chairman and local government officials may include family development issues to educate parents on the difference between permissible child work and non-permissible child labour (Bollig, 2015).



8 Way forward in reducing the gap of social safety-net programmes and eliminating child labour in Bangladesh

8.1 Diverse programmes to eliminate child labour and the gap: Key findings from Key Informant Interviews (KIIs)

In order to understand the nature of programmes to eliminate child labour and the gaps that appear in those programmes several interviews were conducted with high government officials, responsible officials of development partners, local non-government organizations working on child labour issues and academics. Findings from the KIIs also suggest possible initiatives to be carried out in the future which would enhance social safety-net programmes so that they could contribute to the elimination of child labour. Table 8 summarizes the key observations that were obtained from the KIIs.²²

Table 10: Key findings from the KIIs

Selected organizations for KIIs	Objectives/Targets focusing on child labour issues	Strategies to eliminate child labour
Ministry of Labour and Employment (MoLE), Ministry of Women and Children Affairs (MWCA)	1. Take immediate and effective measures to eliminate the worst forms of child labour, including recruitment and use of children in different hazardous activities 2. End child labour in all its forms by 2025	1. Proper implementation of existing policies and child labour related social safety-net programmes. For example, the respective ministries should put special emphasis on reporting about implementation of child-focused programmes during their monthly performance evaluation meetings, 2. Ministry of Labour and Employment (MoLE) conducts regular meetings to identify industries and sectors where children are working and takes measures against the enterprises that employ children. 3. The ministry has been implementing projects to address the child labour issue at three levels: i) prevention (trainings, mass awareness, child-friendly spaces, activation of local level committees, campaign against early marriage etc.), ii) protection, and iii) restoration.

²² Details of the KIIs are discussed in Annex II.

Table 10: Key findings from the KIIs (cont.)

Selected organizations for KIIs	Objectives/Targets focusing on child labour issues	Strategies to eliminate child labour
Save the Children	To promote child rights and to empower children working as child labour.	1. Five key issues are needed to improve the child labour situation in Bangladesh. They are: education, training, advocacy, employment and technological innovation. 2. The key strategies are to provide accelerated education programmes for working children, design programmes to improve communication skills, analytical ability, and technological skills, and create employment opportunities by connecting children with different financial institutions, including many others. 3. It also develops appropriate corporate social responsibility policies for children (hazardous and non-hazardous labour) and provides advocacy to different ministries dealing with the child labour issue including the Ministry of labour and employment, trade unions, employers' associations like BGMEA, BKMEA and many others.
Manusher Jonno Foundation	To eliminate hazardous child labour by 2021 2. To achieve Article 8.7 of SDG goal 8 to eradicate all forms of child labour by 2025.	1. Four strategies to improve the conditions of child labour working in hazardous conditions. The strategies are prevention, protection, rehabilitation, Child Act promotion, and sustainability. Prevention can be done by expanding poverty reduction or income-generating programmes for the households with children. Protection could be enhanced by the implementation of the labour law and also by providing enrolling children in the school stipend and school feeding programmes. Rehabilitation can be done by providing shelter and food to extremely vulnerable children (abandoned, already exposed to violence etc.) 2. It implements these strategies through three steps: Grant making, Capacity Development and Policy Advocacy
Eco Social Development Organization (ESDO)	1. To ensure child rights, remove hazardous child labour working in the informal sector, and 2. To sensitize government about the situation of child labour.	1. The main strategies of ESDO are to provide education to drop-out children, to promote implementation of the Child Act, prevent children from dropping out from school, rehabilitation, Child Act promotion, and develop the skill of the children, and work with the mothers of the child labourers.

8.2 Insights from the workshop

The preliminary findings of this study were shared among the participants of a workshop which was held on 11 December, 2018. During the workshop the exit strategy and way forward regarding the recently concluded ILO's CLEAR project were discussed and in that connection, this study report was presented and the participants expressed their views on the ways to make social safety-net programmes more effective for eliminating child labour. The workshop has permitted to gather views from some of the stakeholders who were not covered by the KIIs (the list of participants is to be found in Annex IV). It was noted that government, employers' associations, workers' organizations, NGOs, local government representatives, civil society and development partners all need to work together towards the elimination of child labour. It was also noted that various programmes of UNICEF to support the Bangladesh Government in creating education opportunities for children can go a long way in eliminating child labour. It was felt that more technical and vocational training programmes are necessary for working children, so that children from poor families can learn the necessary skills to enter the job market immediately after reaching the age of being able to do so. This would attract the parents to send their children to school. The development partners such as ILO, UNICEF, and Save The Children need to continue their support to different stakeholders in order to achieve the sustainable elimination of child labour in Bangladesh. Representatives from local government can play a very effective role in the process of selecting poor families with children as beneficiaries of various social safety-net programmes. As street children are the most vulnerable amongst them, programmes with greater coverage for these children are necessary and, in this regard, both government and NGOs can play substantial roles in implementing programmes for them. It was noted that there is a regional disparity in terms of the extent of prevalence of child labour; more specifically, poorer regions have a tendency to have more child labour. Therefore, coverage of social safety-net programmes should take this regional disparity into consideration. To reap more benefits of the demographic dividend²³ currently being enjoyed by Bangladesh, more programmes and funds should be allocated in the national budget for children particularly in terms of the social safety net.

8.3 Strengthening the current social safety-net programmes and other government and non-government initiatives to accelerate the reduction of child labour

Programmes and activities of various organizations covered under KIIs, as well as the discussion held by the participants of the above-mentioned workshop, depict a picture of activities that are in place to eliminate all forms of child labour from Bangladesh by 2025. As could be assumed from the discussion in the last section, many organizations, even at the grassroots and government level are implementing programmes mainly to restore children who are involved in hazardous work, prevent children (mainly of poor families) from becoming involved in child labour and protect children who are working excessive hours. Children are supported through various approaches: formal education, training for future opportunities to be involved in better work, awareness raising among the parents, supporting families so that they can forgo the income from their children and the monitoring of implementation of rules and regulations. It was evident from the study that although there are a good number of social safety-net programmes in Bangladesh, those that specifically address the issue of



23 Dominance of proportions of youth in the population.

child labour are still limited. The issue is mainly dealt with through school stipend and school-feeding programmes and some other rehabilitation and cash transfer programmes for children. However, apart from school-based programmes, the allocation for most of the other programmes for children is limited. It is also felt that children could benefit more if various supports under the social safety net could target beneficiaries by taking into account the child labour problem. Programmes for homeless children (or street children) should be increased as they are very vulnerable.

Moreover, it appears to be very difficult to get detailed information on the safety-net programmes, as only the list and budget seem to be accessible from a single source. An information web-portal under the Ministry of Planning or Ministry of Finance should be maintained to include detailed information on social safety-net programmes including the involvement of development partners and implementing NGOs (where applicable). The following recommendations are made to increase efforts for the elimination of child labour laid out in the social safety-net programmes as well as in other government programmes and non-governmental organization initiatives.

i. Redesigning social safety-net programmes

There is a link between poverty and child labour. A child from a poor family is more likely to become involved in child labour in the future. Hence, while designing a safety-net programme, the government should include more of such families. Also, the government can give priority to the mother of a child engaged in child labour in the social safety-net programmes. School-based programmes should allocate more for children who are working as child labour. This should increase the school attendance of children and in turn reduce the tendency of children to become involved in child labour. However, some school-based programmes such as school feeding and take-home rations have a much bigger impact on school attendance than on getting rid of child labour (Bollig, 2015); these programmes cannot play a significant role on working children who are already out of school. Therefore, providing out-of-school children or street children with nutritious meal programmes like VGD and VGF should be transformed into a systematic approach of home-based and community-based feeding programmes.

The cash transfers programmes such as old-age allowance, allowances for the widow, deserted and destitute women as well other programmes such as Open Market Sales (OMS), Test Relief (TR) cash should be designed in such a way that allocation should go to households with working children or children under fifteen years of age. Especially, old people who look after their grandchildren in cases where the parents of the child are dead or in families with a single mother, would be prioritized through Community Based Targeting. The old-age allowance targeted for these families will help them overcome the intergenerational poverty cycle and also help the mother to work while the children will have the possibility to go to school provided there is a guardian at home to look after them. Moreover, since well-designed targeting systems of cash transfers programmes coupled with supply-side interventions such as provisions of schools, after-school activities and health facilities will have a greater impact on reducing child labour, the government should focus more on exploring these programmes. Other social protection programmes such as Employment Generation Program for the Poor and Work For Money (WFM) can reduce households' reliance on child labour by providing a source of employment to adults. Government should therefore pay special attention to these programmes. A simple comparison of poverty rates between urban and rural areas may underestimate the prevalence of urban poverty given the higher living costs in urban areas. The nature of urban poverty may be different from the challenges and issues in rural areas: poor living

conditions, often without a stable supply of water, sanitation, and electricity, are a big concern for poor urban families, particularly children. In light of the situation, policy efforts are needed to adapt SPL programmes to urban settings while continuing support to the rural poor. Motivational programmes for parents of poor families with children engaged in child labour should be undertaken throughout the economy.

ii. Creating a Database

A database of the families who have children involved in child labour should be created and updated every three or six months. This will help to keep track of the food security situation in the families and understand the mechanism by which a child becomes involved in child labour. This can be generated as part of the development of a sound MIS system in the country. The database can be maintained by MoLE with support from the local government representatives. This can also be linked to the database of households, which is being developed for the successful implementation of the NSSS.

iii. Child-focused Budget (CFB)

The child-focused budget does not address child labour directly or specifically, hence specific budget allocation focusing on the issue of child labour needs to be included. Also, indicating the geographical distribution of the CFB will ensure that government and NGO allocation don't overlap. The CFB should include free schooling programmes for child labourers who want to return to school. This programme should include drop-out children who are less than 14 years old in mainstream education and provide vocational training for children who are over 14 years old. Also, the inclusion of street children and vulnerable children in the CFB, as well as the inclusion of parents of children involved in child labour in special budget programmes would help to reduce the number of such children.

iv. Coordination between the activities of different ministries

Bangladesh is a densely populated country and the population is increasing. Along with this the child population is correspondingly on the rise. Therefore, programmes and plans for the elimination of child labour should also forecast the quantity and characteristics of children who in the future are likely to become involved in child labour. Focusing only on existing child labour will not bring about a permanent solution neither is the elimination of existing child labour a permanent solution, rather creating strategies to prevent current and future children from becoming involved in child labour should be the optimal objective.

In order to achieve the goal of eliminating child labour from Bangladesh, better coordination between the programmes and activities of the Ministry of Labour and Employment, the Ministry of Women and Children Affairs, together with the Ministry of Education (both primary and secondary) is needed. The National Child Labour Welfare Council (NCLWC), created in 2014, can play a vital role to guide, coordinate and monitor the implementation of the NPA for the elimination of child labour. The NCLWC is mandated to analyse and review the overall situation of child rights in the country and advise the Bangladesh Government on the successful implementation of the Child Labour Elimination Policy of Bangladesh. The NCLWC, which has been supported by the ILO, is also mandated to coordinate all country-level initiatives relating to child labour and monitor the activities through the Divisional and District Child Labour Welfare Councils.

Sometimes there is a tendency of non-cooperation on the part of local representatives when it comes to addressing issues related to child labour. However, the actions of the representatives of local government are crucial for the sustainable elimination of child labour from all over Bangladesh. They need to be incorporated in the basic implementation design of various safety-net programmes for the elimination of child labour. Therefore, a proper mandate focusing on the prevention of child labour within appropriate ministries, as well as emphasizing accountability in the ministries are of vital importance. Each ministry should be properly informed regarding their assignment in addressing child labour issues. A separate centre or web portal within each ministry can be created which will be assigned to the policy for the elimination of child labour. Also, the government can create a separate directory or ministry for children, if deemed necessary.

v. Promoting evidence-based policymaking

Social protection programmes should be designed on the basis of a wide range of data collected through household surveys or by maintaining administrative records. Evidence collected for policy-making should include information on the prevalence of child labour and the role of social protection programmes in preventing child labour. The preparation of a child budget every year may include a process of regular data collection on child labour as well as information gathered on eligibility and effective coverage by social protection programmes. Such a process would allow estimations on the impact of different programmes, better design and targeting, etc. on a regular basis. The adoption of more social protection programmes is needed in order to combat hazardous child labour and the coverage of current programmes needs to be enhanced. Moreover, technical and vocational training institutes for children should be supported by the safety-net programmes.

vi. Improving the efficiency and transparency of programmes under the social protection system

The efficiency and transparency of the programmes under the social protection system including the programmes for children, should be enhanced in order to make the best use of resources allocated for social protection. As concerns the cash transfer programmes it is critical to ensure the efficiency and transparency of targeting and payment performance. Several recommendations have been made in the NSSS to improve such efficiency including payment to beneficiaries' (or account of authorized representative) bank account, and developing a household database of income and assets. The World Bank has initiated a "Cash Transfer Modernization Project" to support the Department of Social Services of the Ministry of Social Welfare to modernize four major social protection programmes using cash transfers by improving beneficiary targeting, programme administration, and benefit payments (for detail see World Bank, 2018). More specifically, the development objective of the Cash Transfer Modernization Project of the World Bank is to improve the transparency and efficiency of selected cash transfer programmes for vulnerable populations by modernizing service delivery. The four programmes are: Old-Age Allowance; Allowances for the Widow, Deserted and Destitute Women; Allowances for the Financially Insolvent Disabled; and Stipends for Disabled Students. Such efficiency enhancement initiatives could be undertaken for various social safety-net programmes which have an impact on the elimination of child labour.

Transparency and accountability of the ministries who implement programmes related to the elimination of child labour, should be ensured not only by regular coordination meetings of the respective ministries, but also by MoLE and NCLWC. Development partners such as the ILO, UNICEF,

Save The Children, and World Bank should also advise and support various ministries in adopting and successfully implementing different programmes.

vii. Monitoring of programmes at the community and grassroots level

Participation of community-level leaders and representatives of local government, including local level NGOs can ensure that safety-net programmes actually contribute to the elimination of child labour. They can connect poor families who have children involved in child labour to the facilities of safety-net programmes. Sensitization of local people on the matter is also necessary. In this connection, the model of mobilizing community-level leaders to address the child labour issue, under the recently finished CLEAR project of the ILO could be followed.

viii. Capacity building

Among various stakeholders including relevant ministries there is a clear lack of understanding regarding the definition, nature of problems, and coverage of social safety-net programmes. Capacity building of actors, especially at the grassroots level, around issues related to the elimination of child labour, can go a long way towards ensuring the successful implementation of programmes. Sensitization of people in the locality is similarly important.

8.4 Concluding remarks

It appears from various sources of information, analysis and discussions above that the issues surrounding child labour have received considerable attention in recent national documents including the Bangladesh Child Labour Elimination Policy and Action Plan, the Bangladesh Child Labour Survey 2013, the National Social Security Strategy 2015 and the Child-focused Budget. Considering the intensity of the situation of child labour, including the fact that a large number of children are working in hazardous sectors, government appears to have taken initiatives to expand some important existing programmes and start new programmes. For example, the coverage of the stipend programmes for primary and secondary school students has been continuously spreading. The NSSS has considered the problem of child labour to be a multi-dimensional problem, and the social safety-net programmes have been planned to take a coordinated approach towards children, from very young to adolescents, and also towards the mothers and other adult members of the households. Coordination between different programmes is necessary whereby the Ministry of Labour and Employment and the Ministry of Women and Children Affairs together with the Ministry of Education (both primary and secondary) regularly meet to coordinate with each other. Every ministry now has its own SDG implementation agenda. Considering that the elimination of child labour is an important SDG target, various programmes for the elimination of child labour could be discussed on this platform.

Safety-net programmes are too numerous in Bangladesh and most of them suffer from poor implementation and governance-related problems. Systemic weaknesses prevail in reaching deserving beneficiaries of social safety-net programmes, which is also a reality in implementing programmes for the elimination of child labour. Evaluation of completed child-focused safety-net programmes on a regular basis is necessary and, in this connection, more resources need to be channeled. The non-governmental organizations working for the elimination of child labour should also be supported.



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Annexes

Annex I: Social Safety-Net Programmes: Budget 2016-17 (revised) & Budget 2017-18

		Coverage (Persons in 100 thousand/Man Month)	Budget (BDT in 10 million)		
		Budget (2017-18)	Budget (2018-19)	Budget (2017-18)	Budget (2018-19)
Sl. No.	Social Protection Programme				
CASH Transfer for Social Protection					
1	Old-Age Allowance	35	40	2,100	2,400
2	Allowances for the Widow, Deserted and Destitute Women	12.65	14	759	840
3	Allowances for the Financially Insolvent Disabled	8.25	10	693	840
4	Assistance for Cancer, Kidney, Liver Cirrhosis and other Patients	0.1	0.15	50	75
5	Grants for Residents in Government Orphanages and Other Institutions	0.2	0.21	51	54.66
6	Capitation Grants for Orphan Students in Non-gov. Orphanages	0.98	0.98	103.68	103.68
7	Programme for Livelihood Improvement of tea-garden labourer	0.3	0.4	15	20
8	Maternity Allowance Programme for the Poor	6	7	377.09	693
9	Allowances for Urban Lactating Mothers	2	2.5	128	248.5
10	Honorarium for Freedom Fighters	2	2	3,200	3,305
11	Honorarium & Medical Allowances for Injured Freedom Fighters	0.15	0.15	267.36	295.07
12	Ration for Shaheed Family and Injured Freedom Fighters	0.3	0.3	33	33.5
13	Block Allocation for Disaster Management	13.09	17.63	255	291
14	General Relief Activities (Block)	0	0	270	470
15	Non-Bengali Rehabilitation	0.23	0.15	15.2	10

Annex I: Social Safety-Net Programmes: Budget 2016-17 (revised) & Budget 2017-18 (cont.)

Sl. No.	Social Protection Programme	Coverage (Persons in 100 thousand/Man Month)		Budget (BDT in 10 million)	
		Budget (2017-18)	Budget (2018-19)	Budget (2017-18)	Budget (2018-19)
16	Pension for Retired Government Employees and their Families	6.26	6.3	10,018.18	22,639.46
Food Security programmes for Social Protection					
17	Open Market Sales (OMS)	100.94	121.64	785.25	832
18	Vulnerable Group Development (VGD) (Man Month)	139.81	142.47	1,605.7	1,685.07
19	Vulnerable Group Feeding (VGF)	51.78	64.72	1,348.88	1,730.81
20	Gratuitous Relief (Food)	56.82	56.82	526.91	540.88
21	Food Assistance in CTG-Hill Tracts Area (Man Month)	8.28	7.76	294.46	282.82
22	Food For Work (FFW) (Man Month)	8.03	11.01	792.51	987.58
23	Work For Money (WFM) (Man Month)	19.21	15.18	911.39	720
24	Test Relief (TR) Cash (Man Month)	17.83	19.06	1,300	1,390
25	Employment Generation Programme for the Poor (Man Month)	8.27	8.27	1,650	1,650
26	Food friendly Programme	0.2	0.5	255	638
Miscellaneous Funds for Social Protection					
27	Service and Assistance Centre for Disabled	3.07	3.76	65	65
28	Programme for Improving the Livelihood of Bada & disadvantage common unity	0.25	0.29	20.69	27
29	Rehabilitation and Creation of Alternative Employment for Beggars	0.01	0.06	3	3
30	Programme for Improving the Livelihood of Trans Gender (Hijra)	0.04	0.07	11.35	11.4
31	Women's Skill Based Training For Livelihood	0	0	4.48	6.8
32	Child Development Centre	0.03	0.03	5.25	5.8
33	Street Children Rehabilitation Programme	0.02	0.02	3.53	4
34	Fund for Climate Change	4.5	4.5	100	300
35	National Service	1.12	1.49	504.9	669.6
36	Pension Insurance Scheme	0.02	0.02	12	12
37	Block Allocation for Various Programme	0.07	0.09	260.67	327.15
Total Social Protection		507.81	559.53	28,796.48	44,207.78

Sl. No. Programmes for Social Empowerment		Coverage (Persons in lac100 thousand /Man Month)		Budget (BDT in 10 million)	
		Budget (2017-18)	Budget (2018-19)	Budget (2017-18)	Budget (2018-19)
Cash Transfer for Social Empowerment					
1	Stipend for Disabled Students	0.8	0.9	54.5	80.37
2	Grants for the Schools for the Disabled	0.35	0.35	22.96	23
3	Housing Support	2.84	2.96	24	25
4	National Legal Aid	0.5	0.62	13.01	15.77
5	Special Assistance for the development of Char, Haor and development area	0.45	0.9	100	200
6	Agriculture Rehabilitation	0	0	100	120
Micro –Credit Programme for Social Empowerment					
7	Micro-credit for Women Self-employment	0.22	0.28	4	5
8	Micro-Credit through PKSF	26.68	79.37	78	232
9	Interest Free Micro-Credit Programme	0	0	50	55
10	Social Development Foundation	0	0	425	425
Miscellaneous Funds for Social Empowerment					
11	Fund for the Welfare of Burnt and Disabled	0.3	0.3	1.5	1.5
12	Trust for the protection of the persons with neurodevelopmental disabilities.	0	0	10.5	27.5
13	Welfare Trust for Physical Disabilities.	0	0	10	10
14	Shamaj Kallyan Parishad	0.62	0.68	55	60
15	Joyeeta Foundation	0.05	0.1	3.52	2.4
16	Special Fund for Assistance to women development & entrepreneurs	0	0	123.65	125
17	Oppressed Women and Children Welfare Fund	0	0	48.58	60
18	Fund for Assistance to the Small Farmer and Poultry Farms	1	1	100	100
19	Skill Development and Earthquake Risk Management Fund	0	0	200	400
20	Swanirvar Training Programme	0.16	0.17	1.9	1.9
Development Sector Programmes for Social Empowerment					
21	Lump Provision for Development of Special Areas (Except Hill Tracts)	0.13	0.17	30	40
22	Ashroyan-2 & 3 Project	10.65	10.65	3113	913.7
23	Primary School Stipend	130	143.95	1450	1550
24	School Feeding Programmes	35	25	484.18	671

Sl. No.	Programmes for Social Empowerment	Coverage (Persons in lac100 thousand /Man Month)		Budget (BDT in 10 million)	
		Budget (2017-18)	Budget (2018-19)	Budget (2017-18)	Budget (2018-19)
25	Reaching Out of School	5.48	5.6	224	229.08
26	Secondary Education Sector Investment Programme	23.78	18.75	761	600
27	Secondary Education Stipend	10	8.33	285.5	200
28	Higher Secondary Stipend	6.78	7.22	168.67	160
29	Secondary Education Quality and Excess Enchantment	11	0	308.17	0
30	* Maternal, Neonatal, Child and Adolescent Health	400	697.95	702.86	987.6
31	* Community Based Health Care	1,340	1,340	768.71	1,001.9
32	* National Nutrition Services	1,350	900	120	121
33	* Maternal, Child, Reproductive and Adolescent Health	577.83	615.92	182	194
34	*Clinical Contraception Services Delivery	15	34.61	249.57	311.53
35	* Family Planning Field Services Delivery	195.01	321.28	182.66	300.93
36	T.B., Leprosy, Communicable and Non-communicable Disease Control	2,797.97	3,029.25	794.31	859.97
37	Establishment of Hostel for Government Shishu Paribar and the Visually Impaired Children	0.07	0.08	43.74	28.66
38	Early Learning for Child Development	0	0	6.54	0
39	Northern Area Reduction of Poverty Initiative	0.02	0.02	30.11	20.9
40	Rural Infrastructure Development	0	0	2,089	3,242
41	Urban Primary Health Care Service Delivery	2	2	170.36	19.91
42	Urban Public Environmental Health Care Devt. Programme	25	0	80.47	0
43	Infrastructure and livelihood Development in Haor Area	0.35	0.32	110	150
44	Coastal Climate Resilient Infrastructure Improvement	0.5	0.5	240	282.96
45	Rural Livelihood and Employment	5.23	0	335.55	0
46	Agriculture Infrastructure Improvement	0.66	0.69	31.6	33.1
47	Construction of Colony for the Cleaners of Dhaka City Corporation	0.5	0.5	74.5	60
48	Participatory Small Scale Water Resource Development	8	8	85	29.8
49	Emergency 2007 Cyclone Recovery and Rehabilitation	3.05	0	347.52	0

Sl. No.	Programmes for Social Empowerment	Coverage (Persons in lac100 thousand /Man Month)		Budget (BDT in 10 million)	
		Budget (2017-18)	Budget (2018-19)	Budget (2017-18)	Budget (2018-19)
50	Expansion of Polli Daridro Bimochon Foundation for Poverty Alleviation and self-Employment	0.3	0	55.59	0
51	Bangladesh Rural Water Supply and Sanitation	2.4	0	63	0
52	One House One Farm	9	9	1,184.02	1,050.79
53	Comprehensive Rural Employment Support Programme for the Poor Women	0.13	0	27.68	0
54	Establish Regional Poultry Breeding Farm with Hatchery	0.16	0	40.99	0
55	Char Development and Settlement	0.24	1	96.33	22.29
56	Gucchagram (Climate Victims Rehabilitation)	3.38	1.19	432.45	152.46
57	Second Chittagong Hill Tracts Rural Development	3.51	6.02	60	80
58	Construction of Residence for Landless & Poor Freedom Fighters	0.29	0	56.68	0
59	Establishment of Autistic Academy in Bangladesh	0	0	5.36	30
60	Skills for Employment Investment Programme	2.6	2.6	367	481.64
61	Generation Break Through	0.1	0.1	1.67	3
62	Institute of Pediatric Neuro Disorder and Autism in BSMMU	0.02	0	16.6	0
63	Investment Component for Vulnerable Group Development	0.1	0	167	0
64	Income Support Programme for the Poorest	0.83	6	23.13	432.02
65	Skills for Employment and Productivity	0	0	35	15
66	Construction of the Multiple Disaster Shelters	1.17	1	351.2	621.3
67	Rural Settlement Construction for improvement of Rural livelihood	0.01	0.01	35	50.8
68	Programme for Ensuring Employment for the Ultra Poor in Northern area	0.07	0.07	31.69	23.28
69	Poverty Reduction Through Inclusive and Sustainable Markets	0.04	0.04	6.45	49.45
70	Adaptation to Climate Change and Rehabilitation of livelihoods	0.05	0	2.42	0
71	Social Security Policy Support (SSPS) Programme	0	0	8.92	11.89

Sl. No.	Programmes for Social Empowerment	Coverage (Persons in lac100 thousand /Man Month)		Budget (BDT in 10 million)	
		Budget (2017-18)	Budget (2018-19)	Budget (2017-18)	Budget (2018-19)
72	Strengthening Public Financial Management for Social Protection	0	0	48.25	0
73	Skill and Employment Programme in Bangladesh	0	0	65.88	48.42
74	Increase Productivity and Opportunity for Employment for Women (SWAPNO)	0	0	34.68	0
75	Support to the Urban Health and Nutrition to the Urban Bangladesh	1	0.77	20.6	38.95
76	Urban Resilience Project: (DNCC & DDM)	0	0	176	0
77	Skill and Training Enhancement	0	0	335	430
78	Urban Based Women Development Project (Phase-2)	0.53	0.53	20.4	19.6
79	Establishment of 20 Child Daycare Centre Project	0.06	0.06	8.54	11.74
80	Income Generating Activities (IGA) for Women at Upazila Level	0.2	0.2	31.85	61.16
81	Multi-Sectoral Programme to Prevent Violence Against Women (4th Phase)	0	0	30.5	23.54
82	Amader Bari (Our Home): Integrated Old and Children Home	0	0	6	10.14
83	Construction of Vocational Training and Rehabilitation Centre for the Disabled at CRP, Manikganj	0	0	5	3.06
84	Child protection and child welfare	0	0	13	91.56
85	Development of the Living Standard of the Marginal People of Bangladesh	0	0	2	16.83
86	Tottho Apa: Empowering Women Through ICT Towards Digital Bangladesh	0	0	5	145.84
87	Preferential Village Water Supply	0	0	0	150
88	Construction of Flood Shelter in the Flood and River Erosion Prone Area - 3rd Phase	0	0	0	100
89	Flood Management and Livelihood Improvement Project in Haor Area	0	0	285	410
90	Development Support for Special Needs	0	0	502.08	1,126.91
91	Development of living standards of extinct enclaves	0	0	110.3	68.75

Sl. No.	Programmes for Social Empowerment	Coverage (Persons in lac100 thousand /Man Month)		Budget (BDT in 10 million)	
		Budget (2017-18)	Budget (2018-19)	Budget (2017-18)	Budget (2018-19)
92	Improved life Standard for low-income people	0	0	19	60
93	Child and Maternal Health & Health Management Development	0	0	44.95	151.01
Social Empowerment total		7,014.17	7,287.01	19,727.35	19,968.91

N.B. * Coverage denotes number of visits

Annex II: Details Analysis based on KIIs

Elimination of child labour is a major concern of the Government of Bangladesh

The Government of Bangladesh has undertaken various initiatives to successfully achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the United Nations. As part of the SDG 8 on Decent Work and Economic Growth, one of the essential targets is 8.7, which states:

"Take immediate and effective measures to eradicate forced labour, end modern slavery and human trafficking and secure the prohibition and elimination of the worst forms of child labour, including recruitment and use of child soldiers, and by 2025 end child labour in all its forms."

In this connection Government has taken initiatives to eliminate child labour by the stipulated time, 2025. Implementation of existing policies and programmes has been strengthened. The Ministry of Labour and Employment (MoLE) conducts regular meetings to identify industries and sectors where children are working and takes measures against the enterprises that employ children. The Department of Inspection for Factories and Establishments (DIFE) under the MoLE, performs this task of regular monitoring and takes corrective measures. Elimination of child labour is an important mandate of DIFE. The MoLE is implementing country-level programmes to work on the causes of child labour. The ministry has been implementing projects to address the child labour issue at three levels: i) prevention (trainings, mass awareness, child friendly spaces, activation of local level committees, campaign against early marriage etc.), ii) protection, and iii) restoration. The project covers a total of 1,659,563 of the child population including 278,687 boys and 605,652 girls.

During the KII, the respondent from the MoLE encouraged NGOs and private organizations to move forward with skill development programmes for child workers aged 18 and above where they can acquire technical knowledge related to their work. The NGOs can also work to provide non-formal education services and raise awareness against the child labour issue.

As concerns hazardous work, worst forms of child labour and children with disability, public-private partnership programmes may be developed to arrange shelter and education facilities at primary level.

The Ministry of Women and Children Affairs is working for the overall development of children. It is worth mentioning that in the child related Acts and Rules, special attention has been given to the

rights of the girl-child, and child labour. The National Child Policy 2011 also accords special priority to the girl-child. The government has constituted “The National Council for Women and Children Development” chaired by the Honourable Prime Minister to recommend amendments to present laws and rules for the protection of women and children so that their rights could better be addressed.

Activities of Save the Children to eliminate child labour

Save the Children works with different stakeholders such as the government, NGOs, private organizations, and international donors to promote child rights and to empower children working as child labour. This organization addresses the child labour issue by undertaking different programmes relating to child health, education, child rights, and child protection. Currently **Save the Children** has a total of ten projects on child labour and with those programmes, the number of children involved in child labour addressed per year is around 180,000.

Target population: The activities of the Save the Children cover the following three population categories:

- i. Child labour
- ii. Drop-out school children
- iii. Children working in the hazardous sector

Strategy: Currently Save the Children is implementing five strategies to improve the child labour situation in Bangladesh. They are: education, training, advocacy, employment and technological innovation.

- i. Education:** Save the Children currently provides an ‘accelerated education’ programme for working children which offers one year of education within six months. EU ROSC also run two similar types of programmes through which working children can have access to education up to class eight.
- ii. Skills Training:** Save the Children has also designed two types of training programmes divided into 18 sessions which develop skills for working children. The first type of programme is designed to improve communication skills and analytical ability. It also trains educated children to prepare a CV for job application purposes. In the second type of programme these children are given specific training in trade or sectors such as mobile servicing, training on SHS and operating other electronic tools. A total of 18 NGOs partner with Save the Children to provide this training in a total of 22 different sectors.
- iii. Employment networking:** After providing the trainings, Save the Children also works on creating employment opportunities for these children by connecting them to different financial institutions. It provides financial education and entrepreneurship literacy for job placement of these children in different factories/organizations. Moreover, it is introducing different technological applications that can help children involved in child labour.
- iv. Advocacy:** Save the Children has a number of initiatives to create awareness to eliminate child labour along with the ILO. It provides advocacy and develops appropriate corporate social responsibility policy for children (hazardous and non-hazardous labour) to the ministry level, to Jatiyo Sangsad, the MoLE, trade unions, employers’ associations such as BGMEA, BKMEA and many others.

- v. Technological innovation through information and communication strategies:** Save the Children is planning to make a web portal/mobile based app similar to Bd-jobs.com which will be a centre for both employers and child labour. The web portal will have a curriculum on the recruitment process, training, and other relevant materials. The objective of the web portal is to provide job opportunities to unskilled children involved in child labour so that they can get a job in the informal sector with minimal training.

Save the Children will continue to work to improve workplace conditions in the informal sector. It is planning to draw up a MoU with the owners and associations of the informal sector to improve the situation of children involved in child labour.

Activities of Manusher Jonno Foundation (MJF) on Child Labour Elimination

The Manusher Jonno Foundation (MJF) works with different stakeholders such as the government, NGOs, private organizations, international donors to eliminate hazardous child labour from different sectors. MJF has developed its own programme to eliminate hazardous child labour. The programme interventions have both preventive and rehabilitative strategies to ensure the protection of these vulnerable children. It focuses on several indicators of child rights such as the rights to education, health, recreation, development and, most importantly, protection. The main objectives of MJF are:

- i. To eliminate hazardous child labour by 2021
- ii. To achieve Article 8.7 of SDG goal 8 to eradicate all forms of child labour by 2025

The activities of the MJF cover the following two population categories:

- i. Children who are already in hazardous work
- ii. Potential children who may become involved in child labour (age greater than 6 but having received no education, poor socio-economic conditions of parents, siblings are already in child labour etc.)

In the last five years MJF has worked with 70,000 children who were working in a hazardous environment and helped them. It brought more than 34,000 children back to school with the help of the local government committee, civil society committee and with local-level sponsorship from affluent people. MJF has provided vocational training to 8,000 children in order to shift their workplace from a hazardous to a non-hazardous type of work. For the rest, they created a conducive environment within the hazardous workplace by providing policy advocacy to the employer of the respective industry.

In coming years, MJF plans to work with another 127,000 children engaged in child labour. It is planning to bring around 44,000 children back to school (formal education) by providing grants. Moreover, it is planning to provide vocational training to at least 10 per cent of those children in child labour so that they can move from hazardous to non-hazardous work. MJF will provide policy advocacy to 250 partner organizations and provide at least 25 projects to these partner organizations in creating awareness for a conducive environment within the hazardous workplace.

The details of the strategies are given below:

- i. MJF is working to bring children back to school who are uneducated and who have been working for less than two years in hazardous activities. This organization believes that it is possible to bring around 50 per cent of the total children out of these hazardous conditions.
- ii. It is targeting to move 10 per cent of the remaining 50 per cent of children in child labour from hazardous to non-hazardous work through vocational training.
- iii. MJF provides necessary advocacy to the employers so that they assign a less cumbersome task to children. It tries to change the job responsibility of the children working in hazardous sectors. It focuses on creating a conducive environment for the rest of the 40 per cent of children working in hazardous sectors.
- iv. MJF reports to UNHCR on the progress of their projects, approaches taken to address hazardous child labour, working on the new law relating to domestic child labour and facilitating the government in implementing a National Plan of Action (NPA).

According to MJF, the previous National Plan of Action (NPA) 2012–2016 to eliminate child labour failed because of a lack of coordination among the more than 45 organizations/institutes that were supposed to work and a lack of awareness regarding the major objectives among them. Also, the roles of the Ministry of Social Welfare and the Ministry of Labour and Employment in coordinating among ministries and organizations were not adequate.

Activities of the Eco Social Development Organization (ESDO) Child Labour Elimination

The objectives of the ESDO in eliminating child labour are: to ensure child rights, remove hazardous child labour working in the informal sector, and sensitize the government about the situation of child labour. The activities of the ESDO cover the following two population categories:

- i. Children who have already dropped out from school and those who have the probability of dropping out
- ii. Children in hazardous work

The main strategies of the ESDO are to provide education to drop-out children, promote the implementation of the Child Act, prevent children from dropping out from school, rehabilitation, develop the skills of the children, and work with the mothers of children involved in child labour.

The details of different kinds of ESDO activities that address child labour are given below:

- i. ESDO works with the World Food Program and the Government of Bangladesh to provide food to children attending schools across Bangladesh. About 1.3 million children get biscuits daily from ESDO.
- ii. ESDO provides follow-up education to about 30,000 poor children. It has its own tutors and teachers to do this task.
- iii. ESDO is involved in pre-schooling, school admission, socialization and monitoring of children from aboriginal and dalit background.
- iv. ESDO works with different organizations (e.g., BGMEA) to develop the skills of children working in different factories. The duration of the training is at least 320 hours. Also, a certificate from Bangladesh Technical Education Board is provided after the training. Children who are less

- than 14 years of age receive pre-vocational training and training on less risky jobs. Children between the ages of 14 and 18 years receive training in trade and in learning different electrical machines and equipment (e.g., training on the solar home system and computer).
- v. When income is meager, the parents engage their children in different income-generating activities and the children eventually become engaged in child labour by dropping out of school. ESDO motivates Union Parishad members or **Upazila Nirbahi Officer** (UNO)²⁴ to include a family member of the child who is in child labour in VGD/other safety-net programme so that their income does not decrease during a financial crisis.
 - vi. ESDO has a Child Labour Elimination Action Network (CLEAN) in eight districts of North-east Bangladesh. The objective of CLEAN is to promote Child Right Protection (CRP). It partners with 40 NGOs to conduct this task.
 - vii. ESDO works on bringing dropped-out children back to school. The challenge is if a child is too old, then it is very difficult to bring the child into mainstream education. It organizes an admission test for the drop-out children so that they can get readmission. ESDO also introduces backup monitoring systems to stop children dropping out for the second time.
 - viii. ESDO provides microcredit to the affected family hit by financial shock if the particular family is not included in a safety-net programme.
 - ix. ESDO introduces the Child Labour Monitoring System in Kurigram and Lalmonirhat districts. It has paid volunteers who monitor the children involved in child labour through web-based apps.
 - x. ESDO organizes regular meeting with Union Parishad, Upazila Chairman, and UNO to give information on the situation of child labour in different areas of the country. It also provides training to civil society members and Union Parishad members on the different issues related to child labour.

Activities of INCIDIN Bangladesh to eliminate child labour

INCIDIN works with different stakeholders such as the government, NGO, and international donors to promote child rights by providing education. The organization also provides policy advocacy relating to child labour.

INCIDIN recently completed a project on education for marginalized child labour. The project started in 1999 and ended in 2015. The number of children engaged in child labour that it addresses per year is around 350, and thus a total of 5,600 children was attended to under this programme.

Also, the organization just started a job placement programme for school children in Sherpur district. Under this programme, it provides pre-vocational training to children who have at least passed class 5. The current project of INCIDIN is to provide the marginalized children who are between 14 and 18 years old in the **Benaroshi Saree** industry with training to ensure a better future for those children. The current activities of INCIDIN are:

- i. INCIDIN develops facilities of the **Benaroshi Saree** industry. In exchange for this, the **Benaroshi Saree** industry allows their child labourers to get some time off from work so that they can be given education from INCIDIN.

²⁴ **Upazila** is the lowest tier of the local government of Bangladesh and an **Upazila Nirbahi Officer** or Upazila Executive Officer is a non-elected Administrator in an **Upazila**. UNOs are Senior Assistant Secretary of Bangladesh Civil Service (Administration) Cadre.

- ii. INCIDIN provides vocational training to the children engaged in child labour and continues until they reach college level. It also works on job placement after providing training.
- iii. INCIDIN works with different stakeholders of the society to provide policy advocacy on protecting child rights.

The organization is planning to develop a special education curriculum for children involved in child labour with shorter time periods. INCIDIN in collaboration with Underprivileged Children's Educational Programme plans to introduce a 4-year grade that will teach a curriculum of up to class 8. Each grade will cover two years of the national curriculum. INCIDIN also has a plan to connect skilled children aged just over 18 years with the different organizations so that they can go abroad and use their skills and earn money. In addition to this, the organization wants to make a directory for the children so that it can keep track of the location of the children in order to provide future support in terms of providing jobs or necessary training required for a job.

Annex III: List of persons who were interviewed under the KIIs

Sl no.	Name	Designation	E-mail Address
1	Mr. Mostan Hossain	Additional Secretary, Ministry of Labour	Phone+88029515355
2	Md. Musfiquir Rahman	Operation chief, INCIDIN Bangladesh	sabbir.incidinb@gmail.com
3	Atik Anwar Chowdhury	Save the Children	atik.chchowdhury@savethechildren.org
4	Eng. Md. Abdul Mannan	Advisor-TVET & CSR	mdabdul.mannan@savethechildren.org
5	Dr. Md. Shahid Uz Zaman	Founder & executive Director, Eco Social Development Organization (ESDO)	zamanesdo@gmail.com
6	Mr. Obaidul Hoque	Save the Children	obaidul.hoque@savethechildren.org
7	Abdulla Al Mamun	Manusher Jonno Foundation	mamun@manusher.org

Annex IV: List of workshop participants

1.	Ms. Afroza Khan	Secretary, Ministry of Labour & Employment
2.	Mr. Kazi Reazul Haque	Chairman, National Human Rights Commission
3.	Mr. Tuomo Poutiainen	Country Director, ILO Bangladesh
4.	Ms. Jennifer Oetken	International Relations Officer, USDOL
5.	Ms. Salma Ali	Member, National Child Labour Welfare Council & Co-Chair Monitoring Committee
6.	Mr. Syed Ahmed	Additional Secretary, Ministry of Labour & Employment
7.	Ms. Sakeun Nahar Begum	Additional Secretary, Ministry of Labour & Employment
8.	Mr. Khondaker Mostan Hossain	Additional Secretary (Retd.), Ministry of Labour & Employment
9.	Mr. KM Abdul Wadud	Joint Secretary, Ministry of Labour & Employment

10.	Mr. Habibur Rahman	Deputy Secretary, Ministry of Labour & Employment
11.	Mr. Aktarul Islam	Public Relations Officer, Ministry of Labour & Employment
12.	Mr. Shamsuzzaman Bhuiyan	Inspector General, Department of Inspection for Factories & Establishments
13.	Dr. Mustafizur Rahman	Joint Inspector General, Department of Inspection for Factories & Establishments
14.	Mr. Mahfuzur Rahman Bhuiyan	Deputy Inspector General, Department of Inspection for Factories & Establishments
15.	Dr. Nazmun Nahar	Assistant Inspector General, Department of Inspection for Factories & Establishments
16.	Mr. Kazi Arfan Ashik	Director, National Human Rights Commission
17.	Mr. Farooq Ahmed	Secretary General, Bangladesh Employers' Federation
18.	Mr. Z.M. Kamrul Anam	Secretary General, Bangladesh Labour Federation
19.	Mr. Santosh Kumar Dutta	Joint Secretary, Bangladesh Employers' Federation
20.	Mr. Imran Hassan	Admin Officer, Bangladesh Labour Foundation
21.	Mr. Shahbuddin Khan	Programme Officer, ILO Bangladesh
22.	Mr. Saidul Islam	Programme Officer, ILO Bangladesh
23.	Ms. Noushin Shah	National Project Coordinator, ILO Bangladesh
24.	Ms. Suraia Banu	National Project Coordinator, ILO Bangladesh
25.	Ms. Fatema Khyrunnahar	Child Protection Officer, UNICEF Bangladesh
26.	Ms. Hasina Begum	Policy Specialist, UNICEF Bangladesh
27.	Mr. Ehsanul Hoque	Programme Specialist (Child Protection), Terre des Hommes
28.	Ms. Rafeza Shaheen	Programme Coordinator (Child Labour), Manusher Janno Foundation
29.	Mr. Mir Ashiqur Alam	Project Coordinator, Eco-Social Development Organization
30.	Mr. Nirmal Majumder	Senior Coordinator, Eco-Social Development Organization
31.	Mr. AKM Masud Ali	Executive Director, Incidin Bangladesh
32.	Ms. Nazneen Ahmed	Senior Research Fellow, Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies
33.	Mr. Obaidul Haque	Manager, Save the Children Bangladesh
34.	Mr. Abdus Shahid Mahmood	Director, Bangladesh Shishu Adhikar Forum & Member, National Child Labour Welfare Council
35.	Ms. Halima Akter	Programme Officer, Bangladesh Shishu Adhikar Forum
36.	Mr. Johnny Sarker	Country Director, EDUCO Bangladesh
37.	Ms. Onchita	Communications Officer, ILO Bangladesh
38.	Mr. Rashad Ahamad	Staff Correspondent, New Age

39.	Mr. Refayet Ullah Mirdha	Senior Staff Reporter, The Daily Star
40.	Mr. TIM Nurunnabi Khan	National Consultant, ILO Bangladesh
41.	Ms. Syeda Munira Sultana	Project Officer, CLEAR & Programme Officer, ILO Bangladesh
42.	Mr. Harunur Rashid	National Consultant, ILO CLEAR Bangladesh
43.	Mr. Sajjad Ahmed	Assistant Programme Officer, Bangladesh Shishu Adhikar Forum

Annex V: Background information of Table 1

Table1 has been calculated on the basis of the data given in the Bangladesh Child Labour Survey 2013, p.177. According to the definition given in the document,

Children in hazardous work as percentage of child labour (%) = {Children in hazardous work ('000)/ Child Labour age 5-17 years ('000)} × 100

Children in hazardous work as percentage of working children (%) = {Children in hazardous work ('000)/ No. of working children age 5- 17 years ('000)} × 100

Characteristics	2002-03			2013		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Child Population ('000) (Age 5-17)	22,689	19,698	42,387	20,596	19,055	39,652
Child Labour age 5-17 years ('000)	2,461	718	3,179	953	746	1,699
No. of working children age 5- 17 years ('000)	5,471	1,952	7,423	2,103	1,347	3,450
Children in hazardous work ('000)	1,172	120	1,291	772	508	1,280
Children in hazardous work as percentage of child labour (%)	47.62	16.71	40.61	81.01	68.1	75.34
Children in hazardous work as percentage of working children (%)	21.42	6.15	17.39	36.71	37.71	37.10

**Fundamental Principles and Rights
at Work Branch (FUNDAMENTALS)**

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