

# **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF THE MAJOR FINDINGS OF THE SKILLS AND EMPLOYMENT BASELINE ASSESSMENT OF INDIGENEOUS AND TRIBAL PEOPLES IN BANGLADESH**

## **BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY**

### **Objective, Methodology and Sampling**

The overall objective of the proposed study is to assess the socio-economic conditions, skills and employment situations of indigenous and tribal peoples in Bangladesh and develop recommendations for related interventions and programmes.

A comprehensive approach, combining qualitative and quantitative methods has been followed to conduct the study. PPS (probability proportionate to size) was used to determine the size of the sample at the village, union, upazila and district levels using the information contained in the Population and Housing Census of 2011.

The total size of the sample is 10,000 of which 2000 were drawn from the Hills and the rest from the Plains. From the Hills we have selected 890 Chakma, 454 Marma, 246 Tripura, 111 Tanchaynga, 105 Murong and 194 households from other/smaller ITP communities living there. From the Plains we have selected Plain 1,041 Garo, 133 Khasia, 291 Monipuri, 137 Hjang, 533 Barmon, 2,345 Sawntal, 101 Munda, 1165 Orao, 899 Pahan, 127 Kuch and 1228 households from other/smaller ITP communities living there.

## **SOCIO-ECONOMIC**

### **Migration**

The extent of migration is higher for the ITPs of the Plain (12.3% of households have a migrant) as compared to those in the Hill (8.8%).

Extent of migration varies from one ITP community to another. Marmas (8.8%) and Chakmas (7.9%) have the highest extent of migration. In the Plains, Garos (37.9%), Monipuris (29.6%), Khasia (8.8%) and Hjang (26%) have more migrants.

The most common type of migration is from rural to urban areas (85% of all migration). About a fifth of all migration is confined within rural areas in the Hills as against 10% in the Plains. The extent of international migration is the lowest; 5.4% of all migrants from the Hills and 3.5% of all migrants from the Plains.

### **Housing**

The ITPs live mostly in kutcha houses. While almost 90% of the ITPs live in kutcha houses, nationally 74% of rural households live in kutcha houses. This means that only a few of them live in semi-pucca and pucca houses. Obviously, more non-ITP households live in semi-pucca and pucca houses.

Proportionately less ITP households have their own houses. While in Bangladesh about 91% of rural households live in owned houses, only 73% of ITP households have houses of their own. More than a fifth of the ITP households have insecure property rights as they either live on Khas land (public property) or on land owned by others.

More than a fourth of the Tanchaynga and Murong households live on Khas lands. 73% of the Khasi households live on Khas land followed by Mundas (27.7%) and the Sawntals (19.1%).

### **Land ownership**

Almost 43% of the ITP households from the Hills own cultivable land. In comparison, 26.3% of ITP households living in the Plains own cultivated land.

Highest ownership of cultivable land is reported by the Chakma households (55%) followed by the Tripura (43.5%) and Marma (38.8%) households. In the Plains, the highest cultivable land ownership is found amongst the Monipuri households (58.4%), followed by the Barmon (40.7%) and Garo (39.9%) households.

Almost a quarter of ITP households in the Hills lease-in land. The corresponding figure for the households in the Plains is 29%. About 16% of the ITP households lease out land to others in the Hills. In the Plains this is much less, only 9%. Access to Khas land is higher amongst the ITPs of the Hills. About 41% of the ITPs in the Hills reported access to Khas land as compared to 9% reported by the ITPs living in Plains. Thus the ITP households living in the Plains are relatively land poor.

### **Other assets and liabilities**

81.5% of the households in the Hills own mobile phones and in the Plains 78.6% of the households own mobile phones. Computer is owned by a negligible number of households (1.65% in the Hills and less than 1% in the Plains).

The ITPs in the Hills generally have higher level of savings and debts. The ITPs in the Plains buy more on credit and forward sale labour more than the ITPs in the Hills. The incidence of forward sale of labour is however negligible.

### **Toilet**

Most of the ITP households do not have access to sanitary toilets. Only 43.8% of them have access to sanitary toilets compared to the national average of 56.8%. Open defecation is very high, 22.6% as compared to national rural of 8.2%.

In the Hills 47.6% of the Murong households have no toilet facilities. Amongst the ITP communities living in the Plains, open defecation is found very high amongst the Pahans (45.2%), Oraos (40.2%) and the Swantals (35.3%).

### **Water**

ITP households have less access to water from tube wells as compared to the national average. National rural average of the proportion of households having access to tube well is 95%. In contrast 83% of ITP households have access to tube wells. In the Plains it is 83% and in the Hills it is 63%. Those living in the Hills depend more on natural sources of drinking water such as springs and also wells. These sources cannot be easily accessed and more prone to becoming dry or contaminated.

## **Energy**

The ITPs living in the Hills depend almost entirely on firewood (98% of the households against a national figure of 35.1%) as their primary source of fuel while those living in the Plains depend more on dung/straw/leaves (66.6% against the national rural figure of 59.1%). The households from the Hill's hardly use dung/straw/leaves as primary source of fuel.

Access to electricity (around 37.5% of households) is lower than the national rural average of almost half. Most of the ITP households depend on kerosene and the extent almost matches the national (rural) level of 46.4%. Use of solar energy is very high (18.3%), particularly amongst the ITPs from the Hills (29.4%). It is difficult to explain why those living in the Plains have to depend so much on solar power.

## **Food Security**

Amongst the ITPs, the proportion of households who are perennially in food deficit is almost negligible but it is slightly higher in the Hills. About a fifth of the households have occasional food deficit. If we relate some form of food deficit to poverty, then this figure may indicate the lowest limit of extreme poverty.

Though chronic food shortage is slightly higher amongst the ITPs living in the Hills our data suggest that there are proportionately more ITP households in the Plains who have to skip meals, consume less, borrow food from others and are therefore more food insecure. This means that the severity of food insecurity could be more amongst the households living in the Plains as compared to the households living in the Hills.

## **Health**

About 3.6 % of the ITP households in the Hills reported of having chronically ill members or members having disability. The corresponding figure for the ITPs in the Plains is more than double than that found in the Hills; 7.3% of their members are chronically ill.

8.9 % of the ITP members in the Hill reported of symptoms of illness/injury. This is, in contrast, very high in the Plains; 21.1%.

Those who reported illness in the Hills, 29.8% of them did not seek medical treatment. The corresponding figure for the ITPs in the Plains is slightly higher, 32.6%.

Overall, the health situation of the ITPs in the Plains is worse than that of those in the Hills.

In the Hills the most common chronic illness amongst the ITPs are chronic fever, gastric ulcer (13.8%), arthritis/rheumatism, and asthma/breathing problems. Amongst the ITPs in the Plain, the most common chronic illnesses are chronic fever, asthma/breathing, arthritis/rheumatism, and injuries/disability.

In the Hills about a quarter of the ITP patients received treatment from the salespersons of pharmacy/dispensary, from the village doctors, from government doctors who use government facilities as well as from government doctors that use private facilities.

In the Plains the highest number of patients received treatments from the village doctors. They also received treatment from salespersons of pharmacy, government doctor using services from government facilities, and also from doctors using private facilities. More ITPs from the Hill are served in government hospitals as compared to the ITPs in the Plains.

The reasons why those who did not receive any treatment ranges from not giving enough importance to the disease/symptoms to accessibility and cost of health services.

### **Main Source of Household Income**

Transformation of rural Bangladesh is being brought about by increase in non-farm income and employment but this trend is bypassing the ITP population.

Dependence on agriculture is higher in the Plains where 70% of the ITP households are involved in agriculture but mainly as agricultural labourers whereas in the Hills 63% of the ITP households are involved in agriculture but mainly as farmers. Main source of income from self-employment in non-agriculture is low but higher in the Hills (18% against 9%). Less than 3% of households have income from wage labouring from the non-agricultural sector.

### **Disaster and Shocks**

Almost a third of all ITP households experienced shocks or natural disasters in the last 12 months prior to the interview. The figure is much higher for the ITPs in the Plains; about 38% in contrast to 11% in the Hills. These shocks include pest attacks, disease of livestock, floods, drought, low/high price of farm outputs/inputs and illness/accident of a household member. These disasters and shocks impacted on the incomes and assets of the ITPs.

### **Empowerment of Women**

We have found that the female members of the ITPs in the Hill are relatively more empowered in terms of their mobility, decision making opportunities in the households, purchases of personal items and personal autonomy.

### **Education**

There is hardly any difference in literacy rate between the ITP populations in the Hills and Plains. The ITP male population in the Hills is, however, more literate. Literacy rate amongst the female is lower than male both in the Hills and Plains. The difference in literacy rate between male and female is higher for the population in the Hills as compared to those in the Plains.

More ITP population go to school but many of them do not reach the secondary level. They are quite at par with other Bangladeshis at completing the primary level of education but the difference between them becomes large later on with a reversal at the tertiary level where more ITP seem to have finished tertiary education. Thus about 30% of ITP population completes primary level of education as done by the rural population of Bangladesh. However, only 9% of them could finish secondary level of education as compared to more than a fourth of rural Bangladesh population.

Amongst the ITPs from the Hills, the Chakma population has done the best and the Murongs worst in the education front. Amongst the population in the Plains, the Monipuris have performed the best (89%) followed by the Garos.

### **Household Income, Expenditure and Inequality**

Average annual household income in the Hills is Tk. 1,64,696 and that in the Plains 1,65,010. On the other hand annual total food and non-food expenditures taken together in the Hills is Tk. 1,40,724 and in the Plains the corresponding figure is Tk. 91,641.

Wage labour contributes to 34 % of household income of the ITPs in the Hills and 57 % for ITPs in the plains. For the ITPs in the Hills the combined share of crop and non-crop agriculture stands around 36 %, which falls to 24 % for ITPs in the Plains.

Inequality of income is higher in the Hills (Gini coefficient 0.45) as compared to that in the Plains (0.38).

## **Poverty**

51.1% of the households in the Hills are poor as compared to 35.0% in the Plain. The extent of poverty amongst the ITPs taken together is 38.2%. This should be compared with national rural poverty of 35.2% as estimated in the Household Income Expenditure Survey, 2010 and the current figure is likely to be lower. Depth of poverty is also higher in the Hills but the severity of poverty is higher in the plains. Thus, even if an average ITP in the hills has comparable level of income as found for a household in the Plains, the incidence and depth of poverty is higher in the hills. In contrast, the severity of poverty is higher in the plains.

## **EMPLOYMENT, SKILLS AND TRAINING**

ITP working age population accounts for 71.15% of total population compared to national rural 61% with almost equal hilly & plain area and gender distribution. ITP labour force is 62.76% of total working age population compared to national rural 58.7% with much higher proportion of male and of plain area.

Largest proportion of labour force is in 30-64 age cohort followed by 15-29 (32.83%) and 65+ (4.46%) with virtually no variation between hilly and plain area. Monipuri accounts for the largest proportion of labour force in 30-64 age group followed by Kuch and Garo. Proportion of youth labour force is the largest among Khasia followed by Murong and Munda.

Among males, proportion of labour force in age group 30-64 figures most prominently among Kuch followed by Monipuri, Garo and Barmon. In the male youth age group Khasia predominates. Among females, share of youth labour force is higher with the highest among Murong followed by Marma, Munda and Pahan. Share of this age group in female labour force is most prominent among Hjang followed by Monipuri and Garo. Share in 65+ age group is much lower among females than among males.

LFPR of ITPs is 62.76% with 65.05% in plain and 53.88% in hilly region compared to national rural average 58.7% indicating higher than national supply of labour currently available in plain than in hilly region. LFPR for males is much higher than that of females in plain area. In the hilly area also it is much higher for males than for females. LFPR is the highest among Khasia followed by Orao and lowest among Murong.

EPR for ITPs is 0.63 with 0.65 in plain and 0.53 in hilly area reflecting their much greater employment opportunities in plain area. Khasia has the largest EPR followed by Orao and Sawntal indicating their greater employment opportunities than other ITPs. EPR for male is much higher in plain than in hilly area reflecting greater employment opportunities for males.

ITP unemployment rate is 0.37% with 0.28% in plain and 0.78% in hilly area compared to national rural 4.13%. It is the highest among Marma followed by Munda. There is no evidence of unemployment among Tanchaynga, Murong and Khasia. Unemployment rate is higher among tertiary graduates compared to those with no education indicating inverse relationship of unemployment with education. Very low or no unemployment among ITPs is

attributable to their involvement in multiple economic activities and their unaffordability to remain unemployed to eke out a living. Labour underutilization is virtually non-existent among ITPs.

Majority of ITPs (48.25%) are employed as agricultural day labour with 54.99% in plain and 16.46% in hilly area. In this occupation Pahan figures most prominently followed by Orao and Sawntal. Larger portion of female ITPs are employed as agricultural day labour (55.36%) with 62.74% in plain and 17.78% in hilly area. Self-employment in agriculture is 21.42% with 46.43% in hilly and 16.12% in plain area reflecting greater employment fragility of hilly ITPs. Agricultural self-employment is most predominant among Chakmas followed by Murong. Self-employment in non-agriculture is 6.7% with 12.63% in hilly and 5.45% in plain area. Permanent worker is 5.73% with 3.53% in hilly and 6.2% in plain area.

Largest portion of ITPs are employed in agriculture (71.85%) with 73.05% in plain and 66.18% in hilly area compared to national rural average 55.3% reflecting preponderance of ITP employment in traditional primary sector. Employment in agriculture is most prominent among Khasia followed by Pahan, Orao, Sawntal and Murong. Larger proportion of ITP females are employed in agriculture.

Share of manufacturing in ITP employment is 10.44% with almost equal share of hilly and plain area. Manufacturing predominates among the Monipuri followed by Munda and Kuch primarily due to widespread practice of handloom among them. Manufacturing employment is more prominent among females with 14.25% in hilly and 11.16% in plain area. Female manufacturing employment is predominant among Monipuri (70.16%) followed by Munda and Kuch.

ITP employment in the real sector is 85.35% which compares well with national rural average 86.5%. In service sector share of wholesale and retail trade is 3.55%, transportation and storage 2.11%, health 2.04% and education 1.73%. In education share of female employment is higher than male employment.

ITP employed population suffering occupational injury accounts for only 0.99% with 0.73% in hilly & 1.04% in plain area. Occupational injury rate is highest in construction (3.62%) followed by professional & scientific (3.08%), construction (2.17%) and electricity & gas (1.92%). It is the highest among Kuch (9.68%) with the highest in manufacturing (27.12%) followed by construction (20%). It is also prominent among Khasia (5.94%) only in agriculture. Among males, it is the highest in household activities (6.67%), while among females it is highest in administrative & support services (2.22%). Largest proportion of ITP employed population suffer exposure to extreme cold/heat (52.26%) followed by dust & fumes (48.18%) and dangerous tools (22.54%). All these are more prominent among ITPs in the plain area. Kuch and Sawntal account for largest share in all these exposures. This pattern is more prominent among males.

ITPs without education account for largest share of employment followed by those with primary education, secondary education, higher secondary education and tertiary education reflecting that education has little or no correspondence to job market. Employment with no education is most predominant among Murong followed by Pahan, Orao and Tanchaynga. Employment with primary education is highest among Garo followed by Monipuri.

Employment share with secondary, higher secondary and tertiary education is highest among Monipuri. Employment with no education is much lower for males than for female. Share of male employment without education is lowest among Monipuri followed by Garo. Share of male employment with primary education is highest for Garo and with all other education levels it is highest for Monipuri. The same pattern holds for female employment.

Largest portion of employed ITPs are agricultural day labourers (48.21%) followed by self-employment in agriculture (21.74%), paid employee (14.29%), self-employment in non-agriculture (9.81%) and non-agricultural day labour (4.76%). Share of self-employment is only 32.48% compared to national rural average 66.7% reflecting much less fragility of ITP employment. Contributing family workers accounts for only 0.64% compared to high national rural average 15%.

Extent of self-employment is much higher in hilly than in plain area due to preponderance of agricultural and non-agricultural self-employment esp. among Chakma, Murong and Tanchaynga. An outlying case in the plain area is agricultural self-employment among Khasia (88.37%).

Only 8.45% of ITPs were underemployed (working less than 35 hours weekly and looking for additional hours of work) with 7.77% male and 9.43% female. Underemployment rate is higher in plain with lower among males and higher among females than in hilly area.

Across occupations, agricultural day labour has largest share of underemployment (14.12%) with highest among Barmon and Hjang followed by weaver with highest among Marma, unpaid family worker with highest among Tanchaynga. Among male ITPs, weaver accounts for largest share of underemployment (46.15%) with highest among Marma followed by Monipuri. Agricultural day labour accounts for 13.85% of underemployment with highest among Barman and Pahan. Among females, underemployment figures most prominently among fishermen (21.05%) with highest among Munda followed by agricultural day labour with highest among Hjang and Pahan.

Across industries, underemployment is most prominent in agriculture (10.88%) with 12.35% in plain as against only 3.22% in hilly area followed by mining & quarrying and construction. Underemployment in agriculture is largest among Pahan followed by Barmon, while in mining & quarrying it is highest among Sawntal and Pahan. In construction, underemployment figures most prominently among Tanchaynga and Monipuri followed by Pahan and Hjang. Underemployment is lowest in transportation & storage. In industries in which underemployment is prominent it is much higher among females.

Informal employment among the ITPs accounts for 89.84% compared to national rural 87.5% with negligible variation between hilly and plain area. It is most predominant among Pahan (98.38%) followed by Orao, Sawntal and Khasia. Informal employment is highest in agriculture (96.62%) followed by manufacturing (75.12% as against national rural 88.9%) & service. In hilly area, informal employment is higher in agriculture and much higher in manufacturing than in plain area. While formal employment is higher in agriculture and manufacturing in plain area, it is higher in service in hilly area. Among Murong informal employment is 100% in manufacturing, while among Khasia formal employment is highest in manufacturing (75%).

Among male ITPs, informal employment accounts for 88.96% with highest among Pahan (97.77%) followed by Orao (96.4%) and Sawntal (94.01%). Among female ITPs, share of informal employment is higher (91.15%) with highest among Pahan (99.11%) followed by Orao (97.71%) and Hjang (95.45%). In formal employment, service sector accounts for largest share (41.08%) followed by manufacturing (35.04%). In formal service sector, Tanchaynga accounts for largest share followed by Monipuri. In formal agriculture, Khasia figures most prominently, while in formal manufacturing employment Munda accounts for the largest share.

Average monthly wage of the ITPs amounts to Tk.5634 with Tk.6389 for males and Tk.4466 for females compared to national rural Tk.10545 with Tk.10576 for males and Tk.10379 for females. Thus ITPs are employed mostly in low-paying jobs which largely explain their much

greater activity rate and much lower unemployment rate than nationally. Average monthly wage level of the Monipuri, however, is astoundingly much higher (Tk.13976) than ITP average with Tk.13925 for males and Tk.14299 for females and even much higher than national average. This is largely explained by the preponderance of employment of the Monipuri in high-yielding handloom manufacturing.

Economically inactive ITP population accounts for 37.24% of total working age population compared to national rural 41.3% with 46.12% in hilly and 34.95% in plain area reflecting greater activity rate among ITPs than nationally. Economic inactivity rate is much larger among the female ITPs than among the males. More than 50% of youth aged 15-29 years (men 56.67% and women 46.83%) are outside the labour force. Among the youth ITPs highest inactivity rate prevails among Khasia followed by Tripura and Tanchaynga. This high inactivity rate among the youth is explained by the fact that most of them are still in education or training. The biggest gender-related difference in this age group is that women get engaged in family responsibilities as their main reason for not looking for a job, while for young men education primarily causes their inactivity.

Population in age group 30-64 accounts for second largest share (38.24%) of inactive population with 42.17% in hilly and 36.9% in plain area. In this group, inactivity rate of male is 30.3% with highest among Munda followed by Murong and Marma compared to 42.54% for female with highest for Munda and lowest for Khasia indicating highest activity rate among Khasia female.

ITP population aged 15 years and above who received vocational training accounts for only 2.64% with 2.79% male and 2.5% female compared to national rural average of 2.7% with male 3.6% and female 1.8%. Among ITPs largest proportion of Monipuri received vocational training followed by Munda, Sawntal and Tripura. Across gender more or less the same pattern holds.

Among the trainings received by the ITPs, overall agriculture predominates followed by RMG, computer, livestock, poultry and driving. For males, training received is most prominent in agriculture followed by computer, driving, livestock and fish rearing. For female, training is most prominent in RMG followed by poultry, livestock, computer, agriculture and health. In RMG training Pahan and Sawntal participants predominated.

Overall 40.55% of ITPs (41.69% male and 39.43% female) are averse to training. Among those who express no need for training are Monipuri who tops the list followed by Tripura, Khasia and Murong. Among those who expressed most training needs are Pahan, Kuch, Barmon and Orao. Among trainings in demand, poultry figures most prominently with highest among Kuch followed by Hjang and Barmon. Next in importance are agriculture and crop production, computer, RMG and driving and motor mechanic and craftsmanship and handicrafts.

Among males, training on agriculture and crop production comes out most prominently followed by training on computer and driving and motor mechanic. Among females, largest demand for training is found in poultry with highest among Kuch, Munda and Barmon followed by RMG. Among other trainings, mention can be made of computer, craftsman/handicraft and agriculture & crop production.

Skills level of the ITPs is extremely poor. While largest segment of them (43.01%) have no minimum level of skills required to carry out simple tasks, a large segment of them (37.49%) have very limited level of skills to use tools required to carry out simple tasks. Skills shortage is much more pronounced among ITPs in hilly area where overwhelming proportion of them (73.13%) have no minimum level of skills. ITPs in plain land have much higher proportion of skilled workers at all levels indicating much greater employment potential of plain land ITPs.

ITPs having limited range of basic skills account for only 14.12%. Incidence of basic cognitive and practical skills is very thin (2.62%). Higher cognitive and practical skills are also limited (2.63%). Very broad range of cognitive and practical skills is very negligible. This pattern is more pronounced for the ITP female workforce.

Among the ITPs most unskilled are Chakmas (82.47%) followed by Tanchaynga (80.90%) and Tripura (74.18%) reflecting their backwardness in skills acquisition. Pahan has the highest proportion of the basic worker followed by Orao and Barmon, while Monipuri has the highest proportion of basic skilled worker (62.5%) followed by Kuch and Khasia. Monipuri also has the highest proportion of skilled workers (10.36%) followed by Khasia and Munda indicating their considerable advancement in terms of skills acquisition. ITPs have very limited or no access to labour market information.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. Poverty reduction strategy should be merged with skill development activity for the ITP. The ITP households lag behind others in some basic socio-economic indicators such as housing, sanitation, water etc. Just assuming improving skill will generate more employment and hence more income and hence improve these socio-economic factors may be superfluous.
2. The constraint of poor human capital (indicated mainly by the fact that only a few carry on beyond primary level of education) should be taken seriously while planning to develop skills of the ITP. There are also trade-offs. More factory/urban oriented training (RMG, parlour work) requires picking up trainees from more educated section of the ITP community. This may increase employment but may have less impact on poverty reduction. Skills that are less demanding on education may work well and will get more trainees.
3. The constraint of lack of interest in acquiring skills through training as found in the study has to be understood in a field setting. This may come from lack of knowledge from gains from acquiring skills. The benefits of training have to be made clear.
4. Economically active population of the ITP is almost all employed. They are either wage labourers or farmers and a very few of them are non-agricultural labourers. It is perhaps very difficult to improve their skills. For those involved in farming (more of them are in the Hills), improved extension services can help. The agricultural labourers may be helped to diversify to the non-agricultural sector where wages are usually higher. Training needs are not uniform.
5. A large part of the economically inactive population is in the schools. Two things can be done with them. Either they should be given support/incentives so that they carry on up to secondary level or beyond. Those who do, should be trained in areas less related to farming.
6. Our qualitative study has found that the ITP male and female have started to concentrate on nonfarm labouring works; migrating for work in factories, RMG sectors and beauty parlours. There are carpenters, masons, electricians, motor cycle drivers, car drivers, goldsmiths and tailors, domestic help and so on already amongst the ITPs. These trades could be shortlisted for training.
7. Training program should be designed on the basis of training demand areas of the ITPs as found from the household survey which include poultry (esp. for Kuch, Hjang and Barmon communities), agriculture and crop production, computer, RMG, driving and motor mechanic, and craftsmanship and handicrafts.

8. The qualitative study has also found that lack of information about available training as well as inconvenient venue, distance, absence of daily allowance/inadequate allowance and absence of training in desired trade/subject are the major constraints to acquire skills. These issues should be addressed in skill development programmes.

9. A basic skills needs assessment should be conducted in advance to specifically identify suitable training trades. Industry representatives should be consulted to ensure that the skills attained would have wider market relevance.

10. More women from the Plains should be trained and helped to get skilled work as they need to be more empowered.

11. ITP workers in occupations and activities of highest risk can be targeted more effectively for inspection visits, development of regulations and procedures, and also for safety campaigns.

12. ITP skills development training programs need to be implemented in keeping with the broad framework of National Skills Development Policy-2011 (NSDP). To this end, inter-agency coordination, strong linkages with industry and the labour market, sufficient capacity of key agencies, ITP friendly rules and regulations, training quality assurance, and planning of delivery and infrastructure development, particularly at the District and Upazila levels, should be ensured. MCHTA needs to see that the ITP skills training programs are properly incorporated in the action plan of the National Skills Development Council (NSDC) on a priority basis as spelled out by the NSDP for improved access of skills training for under-represented groups.

13. The study findings point to the pressing need for creating more productive employment opportunities among the ITPs and accordingly enabling them to perform effectively. To this end, the relevant line ministries including the Chittagong Hill Tracts Affairs (MCHTA) should undertake all-out active labour market policies and programs for the ITPs. These programs may broadly include: (i) creation of new jobs through introduction of wage/employment subsidies, direct job creation (e.g. public works) and supporting the unemployed and the underemployed e.g. through micro-enterprise development assistance/self-employment creation measures a la handloom among the Monipuri; (ii) labour market training defining roles of public and private training providers and linking training with labour market; and (iii) employment services matching jobs with job seekers..

14. SDG Goal 1.1: By 2030, eradicate extreme poverty for all people everywhere, currently measured as people living on less than \$1.25 a day. The extent of extreme poverty among the ITPs is 58.6% according to this criterion. It is higher in the Hills (63.3%) and lower in the Plains (38.9%). If Bangladesh wants to achieve this SDG goal, the ITPs cannot be excluded!