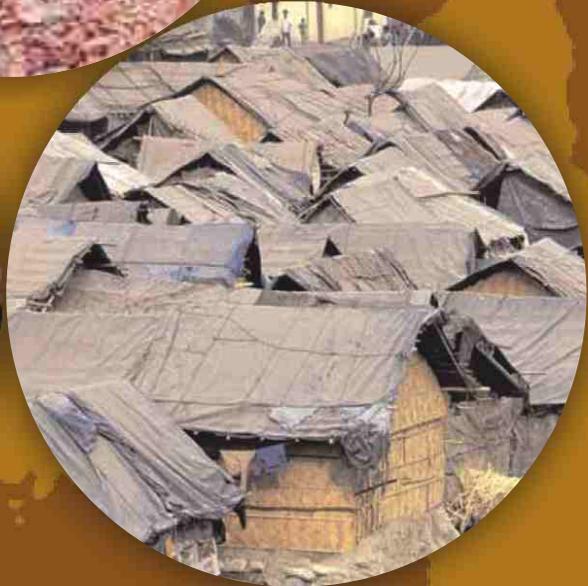


# Review of Child Labour, Education and Poverty Agenda



BANGLADESH  
Country Report  
2006

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# ACRONYMS

Abbreviation	
APSE	Annual Per Student Expenditure
BRAC	Bangladesh Rural Advancement Center
CAMPE	Campaign for Popular Education
CPA	Compulsory Education Act
CSOs	Civil Society Organisations
DNFE	Directorate of Non-Formal Education
DPE	Directorate of Primary Education
EDI	Education Development Index
EFA	Education For All
FFE	Food for Education
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GER	Gross Enrolment Rate
GoB	Government of Bangladesh
GPI	Gender Parity Index
GSS	Gonoshahajjo Sangstha
ILO	International Labour Organization
IPEC	International Programme for Child Labour Elimination
LCs	Learning Centers
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
MPCE	Monthly Per Capita Expenditure
NER	Net Enrolment Rate
NFE	Non-formal Education
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organisation
ODA	Official Development Assistance
PEDP	Primary Education Development Programme
PESP	Primary Education Stipend Programme
PMED	Ministry of Primary and Mass Education
PPRC	Peoples Power and Research Center
PTA	Parent Teacher Association
PTR	Pupil Teacher Ratio
ROCH	Reaching Out Of School Children
SCR	Student Classroom Ratio
SMC	School Management Committee
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNICEF	United Nation's Children Education Fund

# FOREWORD

The Global March against Child Labour, since its inception has been thriving upon twin missions i.e. elimination of child labour and guaranteeing good quality free education for all children as two sides of the same coin. One cannot be achieved without the other. These too have to be addressed in the broader context of socio-economic justice or poverty. It was our endeavour to demolish the age-old myth that poverty causes and perpetuates child labour and illiteracy. The fact is the other way round. Illiteracy, child labour and poverty form a classic triangular 'chicken & egg' relation. Therefore coherence in policy, coordination amongst institutions and convergence in programs is necessary for attaining sustainable development and justice.

It would be an over simplification, albeit romantic and even radical to propagate that opening of schools alone can solve such complex problems of poverty and child labour including slavery and trafficking. In the same manner those who only believe in economic growth and enforcement of legislation, are incomplete in their approach. As a people's movement Global March has been campaigning and lobbying at all levels to build a consensus on Triangular Paradigm of poverty alleviation, eradication of child labour and education for all. Though child labour does not figure in the much talked about Millennium Development Goals or the Dakar Framework of Action, half of these goals cannot be realized without paying heed to these inter-linkages and coherence.

The activism and advocacy work has to be substantiated with academic and scientific research and studies, not only for us to understand the complexities of these issues but to influence the stereotyped thinking of the planners and policy makers. The two present case studies on India and Bangladesh is a small step towards that direction.

The report shows that Bangladesh has a high proportion of child labourer to child population (14% for children aged 5-14 years and 18% for children aged 5-17 years) The official data (BBS-2002-03, survey) returned 4.97 million child labourers aged 5-14 years and 7.9 million child labourers aged 5-17 years. Obviously, child labour is a key constraint in achieving Dakar Framework of Action and reducing poverty. About 10.18 million children aged 6-14 years were not attending any educational institutions (Bangladesh Census 2001). According to official (Planning Commission) figures, 63 million people (50 per cent population), still live below the country's poverty line in 2000, out of which 1/3rd are hard core or in extreme poverty situation.

It is very important to integrate multi-pronged approach by bringing synergy and coherence between departments towards child labour elimination efforts as the elimination of child labour requires multi pronged strategy of making schools accessible, providing quality education in schools, attacking food deficit scenario at home through poverty alleviation programmes, strict implementation of child labour legislation and providing employment to adults.

It is my wish and hope that this will prove to be a starting point for further studies at international, national and regional levels and the outcome could help in shaping inter-governmental, governmental and non-governmental policies. I congratulate the team of researchers comprising of Dr. Sudhanshu Joshi, Dr. Bupinder Zutshi and Mr. Alok Vajpeyi on the splendid work done.

**Kailash Satyarthi**  
Chairperson  
Global March Against Child Labour



# PREFACE AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The three key processes affecting the future of the world, in particular our children are elimination of child labour, Education for All and poverty alleviation. A multi-dimensional approach consisting of awareness building and consciousness raising, community participation, alternative and viable social and economic rehabilitation, enforcement of national and international legal instruments in relation to children and other similar plans, is needed for linking the elimination of child labour with overall poverty alleviation and education strategies. Thus it is imperative that there is a synergy in policy planning and programmes that address these three vital issues that affect the lives of millions of children for a sustainable development.

The present study aims to identify and critically examine the current programmes, action plans and interventions of government of Bangladesh, United Nations and other international donor agencies, NGOs and civil society organizations towards child labour elimination and achieving Education for All goals in Bangladesh. It also evaluates the actual implementation results for addressing the issues of child labour, education and poverty alleviation. The focus of the study is to examine the results based on information collected from various government sources, UN and other international studies as well as through a field study in the representative sample areas across the country. An attempt has been made to identify gaps between the policy, programmes and actual implementation results in the field areas, in order to promote better cooperation and understanding between policy planners, children and advocacy groups working on children's behalf.

We acknowledge the financial support from NOVIB-Oxfam Netherlands and the Bread for the World for sponsoring the study report

A large number of institutions and individuals have extended guidance, support, encouragement and cooperation during the period of this research. We wish to acknowledge our sincere gratitude and thanks to the following institutions and individuals.

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**Sudhanshu Joshi**

**Bupinder Zutshi**

**Alok Vajpeyi**

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- About 10.18 million children aged 6-14 years were not attending any educational institutions (Bangladesh Census 2001). Another government survey (The Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics-2002-03) returned 2.12 million out-of-school children aged 6-14 years. The enrolment statistics for the primary education recorded decline from 18.36 million in 1998 to 17.46 million in 2003. Thus there exists a grate anomaly in the three government source of data. In spite of huge number of out-of-school children, enrolments have actually declined indicating government has no action plan to enroll all out-of-school children. It is therefore important that the government brings out a realistic road map to enroll all out-of-school children in primary and junior schools. The PDEP-II, ROCH and “Hard to Reach urban children” projects address only marginally the magnitude of out-of-school children and child labourers.
- Bangladesh has a very high proportion of child labourer to child population (14% for children aged 5-14 years and 18% for children aged 5-17 years) The official data (BBS-2002-03, survey) returned 4.97 million child labourers aged 5-14 years and 7.9 million child labourers aged 5-17 years. The government road map through the two projects, ROCH project and “Hard to reach urban children project” is unrealistic, to provide access as well as quality education to all working children in schools.
- The public expenditure spending on primary education is mere 2.4 percent of the GDP. Even the public expenditure depicted marginal variations among different stratum of population groups. The expenditure on lowest 20 percent quintile was 22 percent while it was 14 per cent for highest 20 percent quintile. This reflects that in spite of policy programmes for supporting poorest section through incentives like stipend, yet the poorest section did not receive the required education expenditures. Hence promoting access to extreme poorest section was not visible. Thus the delivery mechanism of the stipend scheme or other schemes for children of marginalized communities needs effective control, so as to reach the targeted children
- The formal system of primary education delivery in Bangladesh was provided by a number of multiple school systems. Only Forty-eight percent schools were government primary schools, while the rest of the schools were registered non-governmental schools and other types which are partly funded by the government. A significant proportion of 39 percent students were enrolled in non-government and other primary schools. Due to independent status of majority of the non-governmental schools, limited influence is exerted by the government to adopt national curriculum and national standards in recruitment of teachers and training to teachers. Hence standardization of national curriculum and maintaining quality is major requirement in Bangladesh.
- Although the child population threshold of 44 students per class seems comfortable and within the expected norms, yet in view of a large number of registered and non-registered non-governmental schools which have inappropriate building structure, infrastructure and other services, the child population threshold demands substantial development of building infrastructure to cope with the demand of enrolments and provide access with equity for primary education.
- contrary to general view that non-formal schooling through NGOs is significant in Bangladesh the data did not support the perception, as 98 percent primary school children aged 5-17 years were seeking education through formal school system while only the rest 2 percent were taught in non-formal NGO schools or at home/ family or through government non-formal education programmes. Majority of the NGO schools provide primary education only to a cohort of 33 students over a period of four years per school. Thus effective coverage of primary students by the NGOs schools is limited.
- According to official (Planning Commission) figures, 63 million people (50 per cent population), still live below the country's poverty line in 2000, out of which 1/3rd are hard core or in extreme poverty situation. Inequalities existed in the share of income/consumption among different stratum. The share of lowest 20 percent population quintile was only 9 percent, while the share of highest 20 percent quintile was 41.3 percent. An estimated 85 percent of the country's poor 53.5 million were living in rural areas. Significantly majority of these rural areas like Banderban, Mymensing, Rangpur, Rangamati, Jamalpur etc had very high concentration of child labour and out-of-school children. A negative correlation (-0.6587) was observed between annual household incomes and percent child workers.
- Multivariate analysis with support from the empirical data depicts education deprivation of the child and parents, food deficit at home, non-availability of land and agricultural labour occupation of family, all together contributed 67 percent for existence of child labour in Bangladesh.
- The empirical study reflected households with “Always food deficit at home” (proxy indicator for poverty) also recoded high proportion of child workers, out of school children and dropout rates from schools as compared to the households having “Break-Even or Surplus food at homes”.

- Answer to a specific question asked by the survey “What type of problems will be faced by parents if child stops work?” revealed that “living standards will fall” (69%), “Hard to Survive” (8.1%), “Difficult to run family business” (2.4%) and “Household work will suffer” (2.9%).<sup>1</sup> All these point out that poverty alleviation is simultaneously required along with education initiatives. This supports the assertion that poverty is the key reason for perpetuation of child labor. However on the other hand child labor is the primary cause of poverty, as it pushes children early to premature work thereby denying children the opportunity to acquire the education and skills they need to obtain decent work and incomes as adults. The links are mostly straightforward and tend to run both ways. Poverty and lack of education provision constitute the principal common grounds. Even the latest ILO study reveals that children only earn 20 percent income of an adult earning, while cost-benefit analysis for educating a child works out seven times returns.
- The government policy on child labour elimination has very little synergy and coordination at the grassroots level with general education programme as envisaged under the PDEP-II. Moreover, the scale of coverage of both the ROCH project and “Hard to Reach urban out-of-school children” and the magnitude of child labour are mismatch and it needs substantial scaling up.
- The prosecution and conviction rates in contravention of Child Labour legislations are more or less absent, pointing out poor implementation of the child labour legislations, due to administrative lapses and lacunae in the legislations.
- Public expenditures on education as a percentage of GDP were mere 2.4 per cent in 2002, which is very low in view of the expected norm of 6 percent of GDP. Similarly the percentage of total government expenditure on education sector was mere 13 percent in 2003-04, which was on the lower side of the range of public education spending of low-income countries. Average annual public expenditure on primary education per enrolled student was mere US\$ 23 in 2004, which depicts the poor state of public expenditure on primary education in Bangladesh. The low budget on education has significantly affected the infrastructure and quality component of education.
- The PDEP-II (Bangladesh Action Plan for EFA) has stipulated 18 per cent allocation (out of US\$ 1815 million) for infrastructure development which seems low in view of huge magnitude of out-of-school children, as the existing infrastructure in terms of buildings and classrooms are few. The new expected enrolments will increase student/ classroom ratio tremendously.
- Bangladesh has achieved the near gender parity enrolment goal in primary education, with GPI of 0.97, yet it has a long way to go to achieve gender equity as large numbers of girls are still out-of-schools. Access, reach and gender parity deficit in schooling is observed as the NER is still around 80 percent.
- Infrastructure in terms of buildings, and quality input indicators like, pupil/ teacher ratio, student's classroom ratio and availability of trained teachers were much below the minimum standards in majority of schools in Bangladesh.
- Average effective teaching hours per day were very low due to two shift system in the schools with same teachers. Moreover teachers are also engaged in non-academic work.
- The quality output indicators reflect very poor competency achievements by children, lower attendance rates, high dropout rates and lower transition rates. On average 20-25 percent children aged 7-10 years were not attending schools and a large proportion of children aged 10-14 years drop-out of schools. The results strengthen the observation that pupil eventually drop out of schools either due to poor education quality or due to pressure from parents to work and sustain family livelihoods. The empirical field survey results also depict high drop out rates.
- Currently very little inputs are provided by the SMC in plan formulations and supervision of schools. Thus community ownership of schools is not visible.

### Recommendation

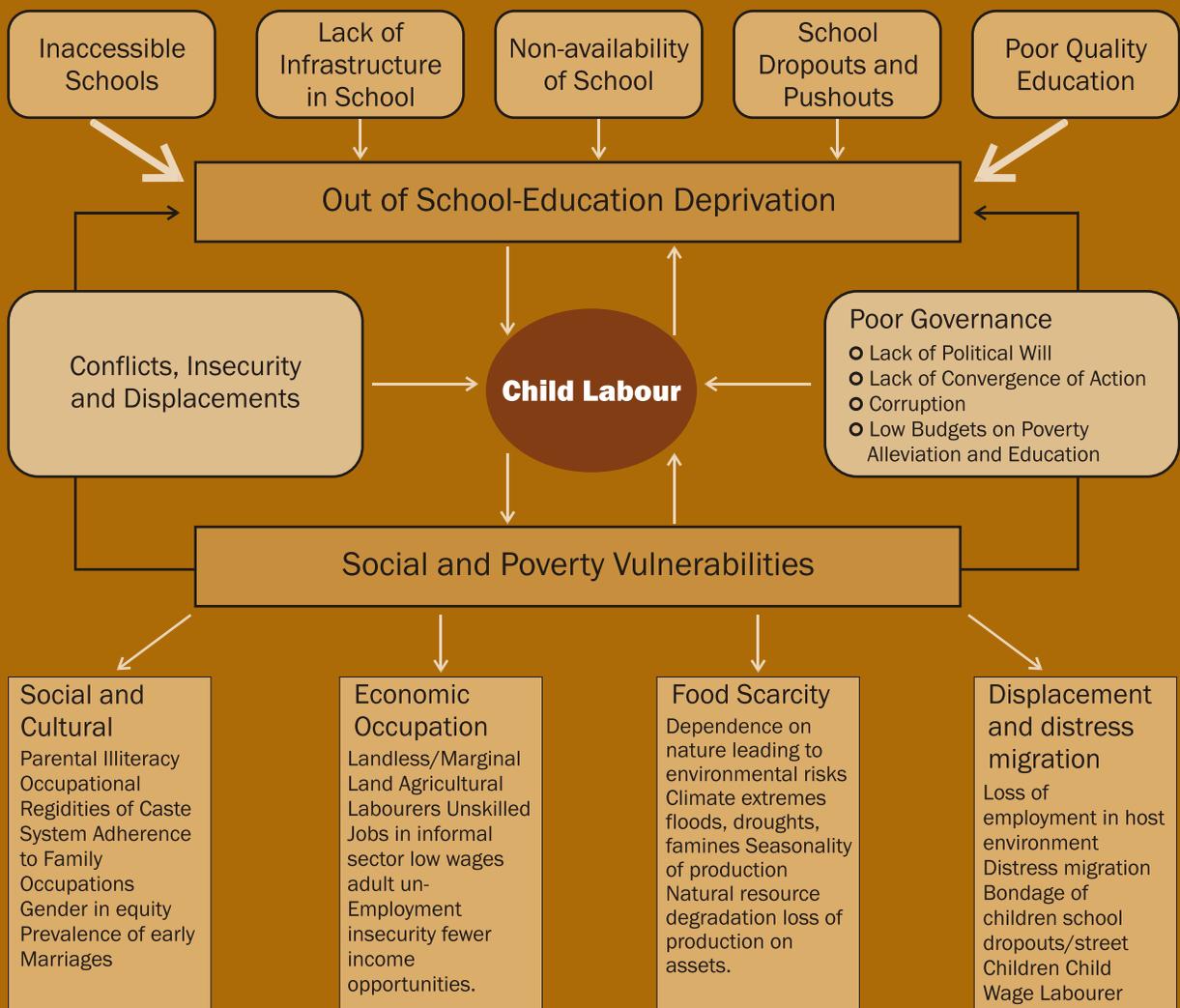
- MDGs and child labor are intimately linked. The absence of child labor from the MDG framework is a regrettable omission that needs to be corrected with a sense of urgency if the intent is to achieve the MDGs.
- Increase public investments, capacity building, domestic resource mobilization, and official development assistance to ensure achieving EFA goals within the target period.
- Incorporate multi-pronged approach to ensure effective synergy and coordination process between departments towards child labour elimination efforts.
- Standardization of national curriculum and maintaining quality of teaching must be given top priority in view of multiple systems of primary education.
- The delivery mechanism of public expenditure incentives for the targeted children must be effectively coordinated and monitored, so as to reach the most vulnerable rural communities, especially child labour and their families.

# SECTION I: PRIMARY EDUCATION

## Context and Introduction:

The issue of child labour cuts across policy boundaries and is cause and consequence of poverty, displacements, illiteracy and adult unemployment. Extreme forms of poverty play a crucial role in encouraging child labour. This implies that child labour cannot be addressed in isolation. Among factors contributing to child labour are rapid population growth, adult unemployment, bad working conditions, lack of minimum wages, exploitation of workers, low standard of living, low quality of education, lack of legal provisions and enforcement, low capacity of institutions, gender discrimination, conceptual thinking about childhood, etc. One or more of the above contribute to the large numbers of children working under exploitative or hazardous conditions; Several studies have recognized child labour connections with human deprivation- illiteracy, food insecurity, distress displacements, gender inequity, social and human under-development, conflict situation and insecurity and poor governance.

## Child Labour - Human Deprivation - Linkages



The Millennium Development Goals (MDG), drawn from the United Nations Millennium Declaration, was a seminal event in the history of the United Nations. It constituted an unprecedented promise by world leaders to address, as a single package of peace, security, development, human rights and fundamental freedoms. The world leaders agreed to a set of measurable, time-bound targets known as the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) to address crippling poverty and its devastating consequences on increasing child labour, education deprivation and overall human welfare. The MDG goals of poverty alleviation, universal education, gender equality and women empowerment are interlinked in a complex and cross sector relationships with child labour problem.

### Primary and Mass Education: Progress Report:

Bangladesh has received global appreciation for attaining success towards expanding primary education, healthcare and reducing nutrition deficiency, even with a modest per capita GDP growth rate of about 2 per cent per annum.<sup>3</sup> Bangladesh has graduated from the low level to the mid-level group of countries in the Human Development Index according to the UNDP's Human Development Report, 2005.<sup>4</sup> (Ranking 139th just after India-127th rank and Pakistan- 135th rank, out of 177 countries,). It demonstrated that impressive social gains can be achieved through social/public action, even at low levels of income.<sup>5</sup> Bangladesh's successful democratic transition is reflected through its gains in terms of increased political and electoral participation of women, enhanced press freedom, and increasingly active NGOs and civil society movements.

Bangladesh achieved impressive success in the area of population control as population growth rate declined from 2.9 per cent per annum in the mid-seventies to 1.5 per cent in the late-nineties.<sup>6</sup> The role of NGOs and CSOs as alternative delivery mechanisms has been instrumental in mainstreaming women into the development process through micro-credit and ready-made garment exports. It also witnessed a significant success in disaster preparedness and in overcoming the phenomena of mass starvation and the threat of famine syndrome in the backdrop of endemic vulnerability to natural disasters. At the aggregate level, the country has achieved the desirable objective of near self-sufficiency in rice production even with a declining cultivated area.<sup>7</sup>

However the issue of food security and reduction in people living below the poverty remains a challenge as 62.7 million populations (50 per cent of population) were living below poverty line in 2000, indicating persistence of social and economic deprivation.<sup>8</sup>

Bangladesh recorded a remarkable achievement in expanding primary education during last one and a half decade with net and gross enrolments increasing by over 20 per cent. It is likely to achieve the Millennium Development Goal of gender parity in primary education enrolments, yet it has a long way to go to achieve gender equity, access to quality education for all, completion of basic education with acceptable competency levels, and relevant life skills, eradication of child labour and equal roles for women and girls in society.

### Progress Report on EFA in Bangladesh:

- "there is a great deal of scope for raising both the primary school enrolment and the primary completion rate in Bangladesh over the next 12 years with a package of interventions that include economic growth.....however the achievements are still likely to fall short of the levels called for by the education MDGs".<sup>9</sup> ( The World Bank Report-2004)
- Bangladesh ranked 105<sup>th</sup> in EDI (Value of 0.663) out of 121 countries rated in Education Development Index (EDI).<sup>10</sup> Actual EDI value decreased from 0.692 in 2005 to 0.663 in 2006, indicating sliding back in EDI during last one year.<sup>11</sup> It ranked 83<sup>rd</sup> in total primary NER, 116<sup>th</sup> in adult literacy, 102<sup>nd</sup> in Gender related EFA index and 116<sup>th</sup> in survival rate to grade V. It projected Bangladesh will fail to achieve Dakar Framework target. ( UNESCO, EFA Monitoring Report, 2006)
- Bangladesh's rank was 11th in terms of complete basic education, 5th in terms of state action for EFA programmes, 6th in terms of quality inputs, 10th in terms of gender equity and 10th in terms of overall equity among the 14 developing countries from Asia Pacific.<sup>12</sup> ( The Asian South Pacific Bureau of Adult Education and Global Campaign for Education Report- 2005)

### Policy and programmes for Primary Education:

The major policy shift in primary education was the establishment of the Ministry of Primary and Mass Education (PMED) in 1992. The PMED reports directly to the Prime Minister signifying the importance attached to primary and mass education in Bangladesh. PMED is the apex body for the management of primary and non-formal education in the country. It has two line Directorates, namely, (i) Directorate of Primary Education (DPE) and (ii) Directorate of Non-Formal Education (DNFE). DPE is mainly responsible for implementation of primary education programmes and management of its day to day affairs. It has field offices at the Division, District (Zila) and Thana (Upzila) levels. The DNFE initiates coordinates and monitors implementation of non-formal education programmes through District Administration and NGOs. At the school level, there exist School Management Committees (SMC) formed as per government directives with certain well defined functions, and Parent Teachers Associations (PTA) playing a supportive role in building favourable teaching-learning environment in schools. The Directorate of Primary Education (DPE) and its subordinate offices in the district and upazila's (Sub Divisions) are solely responsible for management and supervision of primary education. Their responsibilities include recruitment, posting, and transfer of teachers and other staff; arranging in-service training of teachers; and distribution of free text books, and supervision of schools.

### Major Policies and Programmes:

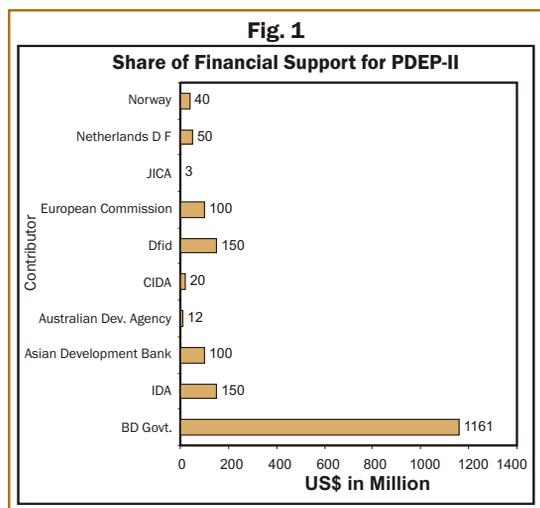
- Enactment of the Compulsory Primary Education Act (CPA) in 1990. The Act provides constitutional provision for free, universal and compulsory education to all children. The whole country was brought under CPA programme in 1993.
- Free education for girls up to grade eight; free books for all children at primary level and Scholarship for girls reading in rural secondary schools including financial incentives to schools themselves. (The World Bank supported project for US\$ 68 million)
- Food for Education (FFE) Programme that provided food ration to about 20 percent of poor primary school children in rural areas, the project was replaced by Primary Education Stipend Programme (PESP), popularly known as Upabritti, in July 2002. The main aim of PESP was to target 40 percent children enrolled in schools from the poor families, throughout rural Bangladesh.<sup>13</sup>
- Support to non-formal education programme by NGOs<sup>14</sup> (The World Bank supported the project in 1993 and provided a credit of US \$11 million)
- General Education Programme (GEP 1991-96) designed with support from the World Bank and a number of bi-lateral and multi-lateral aid agencies. The GEP supported the government's plan to ensure expanded access and reach for attaining the compulsory primary education, increase in gender equity enrolment. The GEP built new schools, rehabilitated old ones, introduced a new curriculum, produced new textbooks, and developed teacher training institution among other reform activities.
- In 1996 Primary Education Development Programme (PEDP) was initiated as the programme for formal primary education. The goals and activities of PEDP projects continued along the same lines as the GEP project increasing access and improving quality and equity of primary education.<sup>15</sup> Major initiatives in the PEDP with donor support were IDEAL project, ESTEEM project, CPEP, SPESP and PROMOTE (Refer Table 1). Instead of a government-coordinated program with donor support the PEDP became an uncoordinated collection of lender and donor projects under one umbrella. The government managed the PEDP through monthly reviews of each of the 25 projects that comprised it. "By and larger PEDP was not coordinated effectively by either the government or by the donors"<sup>16</sup>

During the period 2004-2010 the following programmes and interventions have been undertaken or are in the pipeline to achieve the Dakar EFA goals and the MDG goals on education.

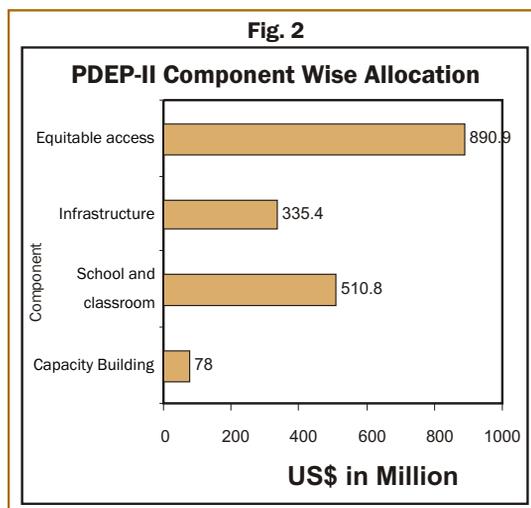
### Primary Education Development Programme -II

The Dakar framework of EFA necessitated improving access, retention and quality of primary education. PDEP-II was launched in 2004 to address the primary education access, participation and quality problems

and sustain capacity building in the primary education system for formal school children. It is a comprehensive programme having financial allocation of US\$ 1,815 million and is supported by the World Bank and other external development partners (Fig 1). Main focus of the project is quality improvement through carefully selected components. Component selected for quality improvement are organizational development and capacity building, quality improvement in schools and classroom, infrastructure development and improving and supporting equitable access to quality schooling, paying attention to children with special needs.( Fig 2)



Source: World Bank PDEP-II Project Proposal



Source: World Bank PDEP-II Project Proposal

- In order to supplement and complement the PDEP-II and reach for about 2.9 million out-of-school working children, through non-formal education, an allocation of US \$ 62.8 million was stipulated for the project on Reaching Out-of-School Children (ROCH).<sup>17</sup> The project was initiated in 2005 and would continue for 5 to 10 years till all hard to reach out-of-school children are mainstreamed into formal schooling system. It aims to mainstream the enrolled children after bridge course/ NFE for 2 to 3 years. It signifies the legitimacy accorded to the NFE system to access hard to reach children, who require motivation, compensation and specific teaching methodology. Grant of US\$ 51 million from the IDA and US\$ 6 million from the SIDA was approved to implement the project. It aims to support non-formal Learning Centers (LCs) throughout Bangladesh and achieve equity in access for primary education especially for hard to reach working children in rural areas. The main purpose of ROCH is to develop both supply and demand side interventions for the hard to reach out of school working children. The supply side interventions include improving services and infrastructure and remuneration for teachers in the LCs, while the demand side interventions include providing allowances/ compensation to meet children's direct and indirect cost of schooling.<sup>18</sup>
- Hard to reach urban working Children Project: The objective of this project is to provide life skills based basic education to 200,000 urban working children aged 10-14 years, especially to out-of-school 60 percent girls. The project will start in 2005 and will complete by 2010. The project is supported by UNICEF and SIDA.

## PDEP-II, Main Features and Broad Strategies

Major objectives of the PEDP-II are to improve quality, equitable access, and efficiency in primary education through a sub-sector program approach. Specifically, the program will assist in (a) improving the quality of teaching and learning, and raise student achievement; (b) increasing access to schooling for the disadvantaged; and (c) strengthening planning and management of primary education, including establishing a national monitoring and evaluation system for primary education.

The objectives are in accordance with the Government of Bangladesh's (GOB) National Action Plan for Education for All (EFA), the Poverty Reduction Strategy as expressed in the Interim Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper, the Millennium Development Goals, the PEDP II macro plan and other commitments.

- ◆ Focus on quality and access to primary education and providing essential primary school quality levels (PSQL).
- ◆ Development of the meso and micro resource centers for teachers training.
- ◆ Integration of the PEDP II programmes within the organizational and operation system of DPE for internalizing the objectives with the implementation process.

## Reaching Out of School Children (ROSC) Main Features

The following components are provided in the ROSC project:

- ◆ For improving Access, US\$ 54.3 million have been allocated in the project. It includes student allowances to compensate for their economic losses and grants to LCs for improving infrastructure, teaching quality and salary for teachers
- ◆ Communication and social awareness (US\$ 2.7 million). It caters to create social awareness and community mobilization for encouraging families to enroll working and out-of-school older age children in the LCs for NFE
- ◆ Programme Management and Institutional strengthening (US\$ 2.4 million). The focus will be to improve programme management through capacity building measures.
- ◆ Monitoring and Evaluation (US\$ 4.3 million). The project will be constantly monitored and evaluated to provide necessary feed back for improvement.

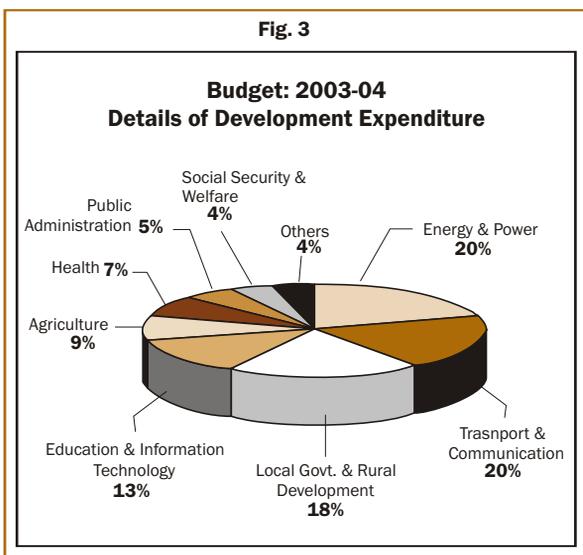
## Budgetary Allocations:

Education in Bangladesh is basically state financed. Government allocations to the education sector are out of its revenue and development budgets. Given the low revenue / GDP ratio, the government however is heavily dependent on external sources for financing its development budget. External aid finances together contribute more than 50 percent of government development expenditures on education. The full costs of government primary schools are borne by the government. The government also pays 90 percent of base teacher's salaries of non-government registered primary schools. Besides, the non-government schools also receive grants from the government for repair of school building. The Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO) decides which school to receive grant and disburses the money. Students in both government and non-government registered schools receive free textbooks up to primary level.

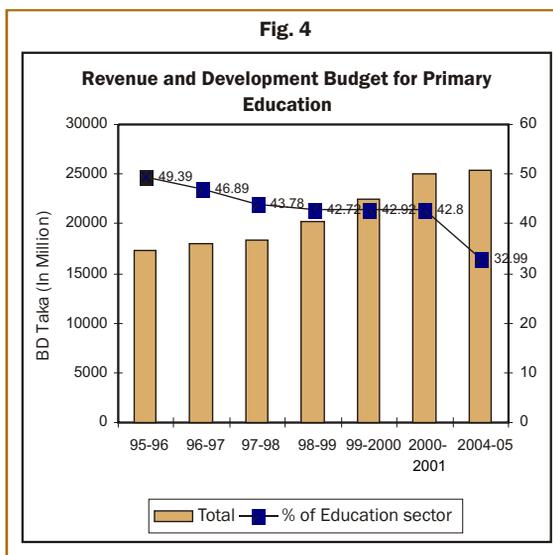
Public expenditures on education as a percentage of GDP were mere 0.9 per cent in 1980, which increased marginally to 2.4 percent in 2002. Similarly the percentage of total government expenditure on education sector was mere 13 percent in 2003-04<sup>19</sup>, which was on the lower side of the range of public education spending of low-income countries (Fig.3). Thus public expenditure falls short of the target of around 6 per cent of GDP for education sector in developing countries. The low budget on education has significantly affected the infrastructure and quality component of education. However after 1990s significant

importance was attached to education sector in view of the Jometian Declaration of Education for All goals. Government budget on education (both revenue and development) was Bangladesh Tk 76,795 million (US\$ 1,209 million @ 63.5 per US\$) in 2004-05. The revenue and development budget allocation for primary education increased from BD Tk 17,395 million (US\$ 274 million) to BD Tk 25,336 million (US\$ 399 million) during 1995-96 to 2004-05 period. The magnitude of increase for primary education allocation was 1.45 times during this period, however actual percent of allocation for primary education as percent to total allocation for education sector decreased from 45.55 percent in 1990-91 to 32.99 percent in 2004-05 indicating higher priorities for secondary education.<sup>20</sup> (Fig 4).

Average annual public expenditure on primary education per enrolled student in 2004-2005 was mere US\$ 23 which depicts the poor state of public expenditure on primary education in Bangladesh.<sup>21</sup> The revenue budget spending per primary student was US\$ 19.5 in government schools and US\$ 7.4 in non-governmental schools in 2003-04 (Source, BANBEIS-2004)



Source: Planning Commission, Bangladesh HDR-2000



Source: Planning Commission, Bangladesh HDR-2000

The public expenditure spending on primary education depicted marginal variations among different stratum of population groups. The expenditure on lowest 20 percent quintile was 22 percent while it was 14 per cent for highest 20 percent quintile.<sup>22</sup> This reflects that in spite of policy programmes for supporting poorest section through incentives, yet the poorest section did not receive the required education expenditures. Hence promoting access to extreme poorest section was not visible. The analysis supports the CAMPE 2003-04 survey results indicating that the beneficiaries of stipend project were even from higher income and social groups. Thus the delivery mechanism of the stipend scheme for children of marginalized communities needs effective control, so as to reach the targeted children

**Access, Reach and equity:**

Basic education in Bangladesh is delivered through two systems: (a) the formal system and (b) the non-formal system. The formal system caters mainly at two levels: primary (ages 6 to 10), and junior secondary (ages 11 to 13). There are now eleven types of primary schools in Bangladesh. Six of these are “mainstream” schools, which implement the government's National Curriculum and Textbook Board (NCTB) curriculum and textbooks. The mainstream schools are government primary schools (GPS), registered non-government primary schools (RNGPS), non-government primary schools (NGPS), attached experimental school (EXP), high school attached primary schools (HSAPS), community school and satellite schools. Non-formal systems schools are Ebtedayee Madrasa (EM), high attached Madrasa primary school (HMAPS), and Non-formal schools run by NGOs.

The primary education delivery in Bangladesh was provided by 78,363 primary schools in 2002. Only Forty-eight percent schools were GPS, while the rest of the schools were registered non-governmental schools and other types, partly funded by the government. A significant proportion of 39 percent students were enrolled in non-government primary schools. Due to independent status of majority of non-governmental schools, limited influence is exerted by the government to adopt national curriculum and national standards in recruitment of teachers and training to teachers. Hence standardization of national curriculum and maintaining quality is major requirement in Bangladesh.

### Schools and Enrolments - 2002

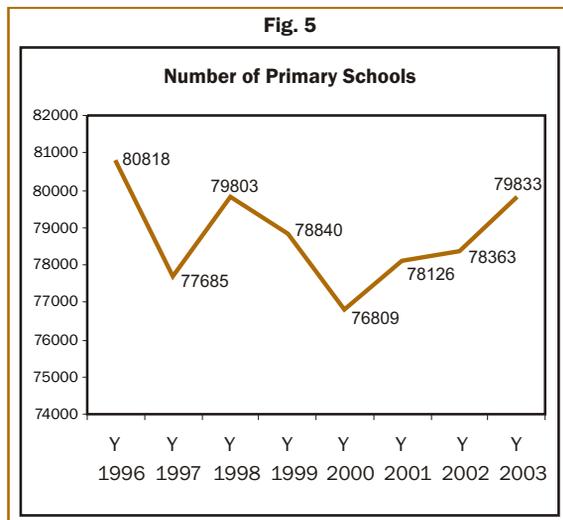
Type	Schools		Enrolments	
	Number	%	Number in '000'	%
GPS	37671	48	10,832	61
RNGPS	19428	25	4,170	24
Community	3225	4	454	3
HSAPS	1576	2	499	3
NGPS	1792	2	307	2
Eb. Madrasa	3443	4	417	2
HMAPS	3574	5	403	2
Satellite	4823	6	209	1
NGOs and Others	2831	4	376	2
<b>ALL</b>	<b>78363</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>17,667</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Ministry of Primary & Mass Education 2004

According to the CAMPE survey 2003-04, significant variations in the building structure, infrastructure, pupil/ teacher ratio, student/ classroom ratio were existing between the government, non-government, Madrasa and non-formal type of schools.

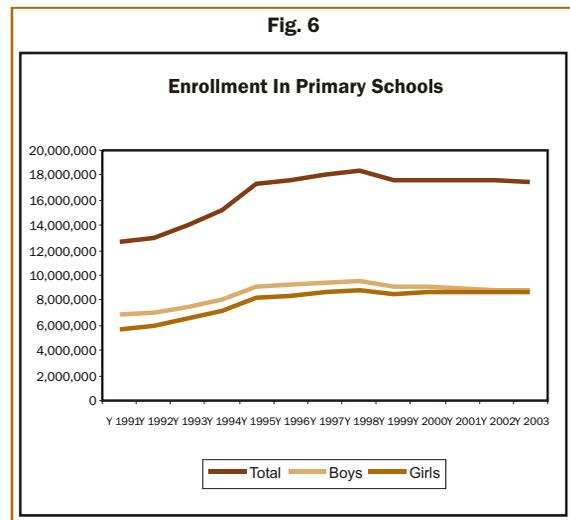
Between 1996 and 2003, the number of primary schools (all types) actually decreased from 80,818 to 79,833 (Fig5).<sup>23</sup> The decrease was more for the GPS and RNGPS schools. On the other hand the satellite and community schools increased during this period. The GPS and RNGPS together accounted for 73 percent of the schools.<sup>24</sup> Ninety eight percent primary school children aged 5-17 years were seeking education through formal school system while only 1.3 percent were taught in non-formal NGO schools and the rest were getting education at home/ family or through government non-formal education programmes.<sup>25</sup> Thus contrary to general view that non-formal schooling through NGOs is significant in Bangladesh the data did not support the perception.<sup>26</sup> BRAC schools although large in numbers effectively provide primary education to 33 children over a period of 4 years per school, as they only provide primary education to a cohort of 33 children over a period of 4 years. Average number of primary schools per Gram (village) was 1.02, while it was 1.15 for one revenue village.<sup>27</sup> However primary school per village varied from 0.60 in case of Rajshahi and Chitagong division to 2.12 for Dhaka and Barisal division. Hence regional variations existed in the availability of schools.

Fig. 5



Source: Ministry of Primary & Mass Education 2004

Fig. 6



Source: Ministry of Primary & Mass Education 2004

The child population threshold<sup>28</sup> (Number of children whether enrolled or not enrolled in primary schools aged 6-10 years) per primary school was 219 for the country. Unfortunately regional data for the child population threshold per primary school was not available. Although the child population threshold of 44 students per class seems comfortable and within the expected norms, yet in view of a large number of registered and non-registered non-governmental schools which have inappropriate building structure, infrastructure and other services, the child population threshold demands substantial development of building infrastructure to cope with the demand of enrolments and provide access with equity for primary education.

### Enrollments:

Government data on enrolments in primary education depicts that enrolment increased 1.38 times from 12.36 million to 17.46 million during 1991 to 2003 period. The increase in case of boy's enrolment was 1.28 times from 6.91 million to 8.84 million and 1.50 times from 5.72 million to 8.61 million for girls during 1991- 2003 period (Fig 6). Significantly a modest increase in the primary school enrolment was observed during 1996-2003 for both boys and girls. In fact actual enrolments have decreased during 1998-2003, in spite of the fact that estimated 4.47 million children in the age 6-9 years were not attending schools in 2001.<sup>29</sup>

There seems to be anomaly in the government data on enrolments, as the Census 2001 data depicts 17.41 million children in the age group of 6-10 years, while total enrolments were 17.47 million for primary level. It therefore suggests that all children in 6-10 years have been enrolled in schools, while census -2001 data depicts that 8.44 million children aged 5-9 years were not attending any schools in 2001. Even if we subtract children aged 5 years from the 8.44 million still 4.47 million children aged 6-9 years were not attending schools in 2001. The Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics survey conducted for identifying child workers again reiterates that 6.09 million children aged 5-14 years were out-of-school in 2002-03. After subtracting 3.97 million children aged 5 years, still 2.12 million children aged 6-14 years were out-of-schools according to BBS-2002-03 survey. Thus there exists a grate anomaly in enrolment and out-of-school children statistics from the three government sources. It therefore suggests that the enrolment data seems to be overestimated or a significant dropout rates have taken place after enrolments.

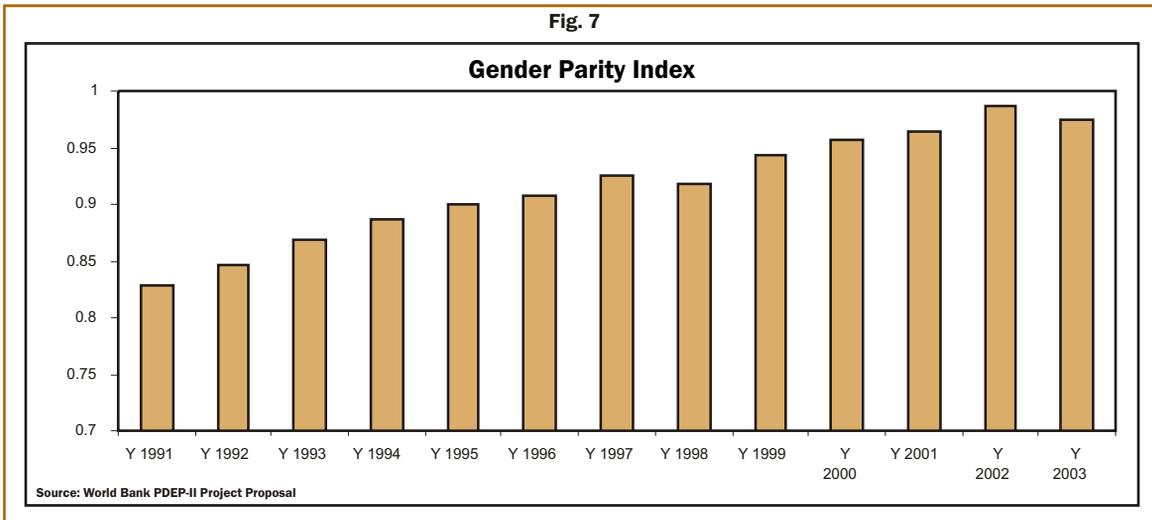
### Gross and Net Enrollment Rate:

The Fifth Five Year Plan (1997-2002) had accorded highest priority to primary education and set a target of achieving gross enrolment rate of 110 percent, and net enrolment rate of 95 percent by the year 2002.<sup>30</sup> Bangladesh recorded GER of 97 percent for both sexes and NER of 87 percent (86% for boys and 88% for girls) in 2003 (BANBEIS-2004). A nation wide survey conducted by CAMPE in 1998 revealed GER of 107 percent for both sexes (109 percent for girls and 104 percent for boys). According to the CAMPE survey in 1998 NER stood much behind at 77 percent only (78.6 percent for girls and 75.5 percent for boys). Thus significant variation was recorded in the NER between the two sources of data. The data suggested that in 1998, 23 percent of children aged 6-10 years of age, did not have access to primary education. Marked regional variation in NER was also observed by the CAMPE survey. The NER was 82.6 percent for Khulna division while Chittagong lagged far behind with 74 percent.<sup>31</sup> Net enrolment rate for slum children of Dhaka city was found to be only around 60 percent-considerably lower compared even to their rural counterparts.<sup>32</sup>

Various data sources<sup>33</sup> indicate that between 1994 and 2003 the primary school net enrolment rate has oscillated around 75-80 percent for 6-10 year old children. While the range indicates that the rates have been slightly higher for females (83-84%) as compared to males (81-82%), the female rates show a plateauing trend afterwards. In spite of achieving high GER and NER, the fact remains that some 4.47 million children (BBS-2001 Census source) or 2.4 million children (BBS 2002-03- survey for child labour source) aged 6-10 year are not attending schools.<sup>34</sup>

**Gender Parity Enrolment Index (GPI):**

Bangladesh has achieved near gender parity enrolment goal. The overall gender parity enrolment index was 0.97 (according to the BANBEIS-2004 data). The data indicates that Bangladesh has made impressive gains in reducing the gender gap in primary school enrollment rates. The GPI increased from 0.82 in 1991 to 0.97 in 2003 (Fig 7). Both GER and NER gender gaps was significantly reduced during 1991-2003. In fact GER was more favourable for girls in 2003. Gender parity in primary enrolment was achieved due to increase in the Government's budgetary allocation for girls' education, free primary education, massive stipend programmes at the primary level, and the Food for Education Programme. In order to promote further equity and access of underprivileged children to primary education, the Government replaced the Food for Education programme with a five year country-wide Primary Education Stipend Project.



One of the factors affecting the GPI is the proportion of lady teachers in the schools, due to prevailing social and cultural consideration. The BANBAIS- 2004 data point out 40 percent teachers were lady teachers (58 percent in urban areas and 29 per cent in rural areas) suggesting this initiative had favourable impact in making parents agree to send girls to schools.

**Infrastructure:**

Inadequate infrastructure in schools has been major reason for lower net enrolment rates throughout the developing countries. Due to initial heavy capital investment, majority of primary schools especially non-formal community and NGO run primary schools in Bangladesh lack basic infrastructure facilities. Unfortunately very little government information is available on infrastructure in the primary schools. The survey conducted by the CAMPE-Education Watch, 2003-04 depicts “Major category of schools did not have sufficient classroom space for all enrolled children”. Only fifteen percent of the surveyed schools were rated as “good”, with safe sturdy and clean roof, walls and floor. About half were “fair” and 35 percent were rated as “poor”.<sup>35</sup> The study depicted that “adequate” clean water was available in half the schools, while “fair” to “adequate” in 80 percent schools. Similar picture was observed for sanitation facility especially for toilet facility.<sup>36</sup> The main focus of the PDEP-II has been to improve the quality of education through infrastructure development; the infrastructure deficit needs to be addressed effectively in order to improve the quality aspect in schools.

**Quality of Education:**

Providing basic primary quality education has been one of the major goals of Dakar Education for All declaration. The Education Watch Report-2000 indicates that only 1.6 percent of students (1.8 percent girls and 1.5 percent boys) had achieved all 27 competencies that were tested through the country wide

survey in 1999. The scores were very poor for English, Mathematic and Science. Insignificant gender differences were observed in the achievement levels. The students from urban areas performed better in English, mathematics and social sciences as compared to students from rural areas. Significantly government and recognized NGOs schools fared worse in the achievement level tests for English, Mathematics and social science as compared to the non-formal education schools.<sup>37</sup> Thus the results point out significant efforts have to be undertaken to improve the quality of teaching, through the provision of appropriate infrastructure, teachers training, accountability of teachers and community monitoring.

Special efforts have to be made to improve the capacity of community and SMCs to monitor and supervise the teaching in class. The present administrative set up has been ineffective to check the quality aspect in schools. It requires empowerment of School Management Committee (SMC) and PTAs to take control of monitoring of schools. Analysis of time utilization of teachers and education administrators has demonstrated that majority of time is compromised for project duties, collection of survey data, register maintenance related to food for education, stipend and scholarship programmes, visits to offices and collection of government data.<sup>38</sup> There is a need to rationalize the non-teaching work load of teaching, so that they may concentrate in providing education inputs. There is a strong need of pre-schools to prepare children for enrolments in schools and address the issue of quality and inappropriate age for school enrolments. Accountability process within the system through innovative community-relevant and community validated quality outcome indices needs support. This will ensure community ownership and create the ground for fuller community engagement in primary education.

### Quality Input Indicators:

The pupil/ teacher ratio (PTR), student/ classroom ratio(SCR), average effective teaching hours per day, proportion of trained teachers and attendance rates were selected to examine the quality input indicators for primary education in Bangladesh. The pupil/ teacher ratio was 54 in 2003 (BANBAIS 2004 data). The CAMPE, 2003-04 report also reported PTR of 53, however the PTR varied from 58 for government schools, to 46 for community and other non-governmental schools. According to the CAMPE survey there were 19%, 7% and 25% less teachers as compared to the approved teachers in the government, non-government and community schools respectively. The CAMPE survey of 2001 had observed that only 60 percent students were able to sit with ease in the classrooms.<sup>39</sup> The CAMPE 2003-04 report, reiterated and indicated that students had to sit in a crowded condition in classrooms making it an uncongenial place for teaching and learning. Only 76 percent student could sit at ease in (GPS) while 97 percent students could sit at ease in (RNGPS). The Madrasa schools were highly congested with seats only for 60 percent students. However room facilities for Non-formal schools were comfortable.<sup>40</sup>

Average effective teaching hours per day were very low due to two shift system in the schools with same teachers. In order to overcome the classroom congestion, class I-III is taught in the morning shift from 9-12 A.M, which the evening shift starts from 1-4 for class IV-V in all GPS and RNGPS schools.<sup>41</sup> Thus effective teaching hours are less. In addition teachers are allocated other duties like, data collection for Census, elections and maintaining registers related to stipend, scholarships. These administrative duties do not allow the required quality teaching time. Unless all the schools are reverted to single shift or separate teachers are recruited for the second shift effective teaching hours will be always less.

According to EFA-GMR 2005 data the proportion of trained teachers were 65 percent, while the male trained teachers were 64 per cent and female 68 percent. However the proportion of trained teachers is not reflected by the achievement level of students, thereby indicating that either the training was weak and ineffective or the training received was at the time of joining the profession with no regular in-service modules. Moreover very little monitoring is undertaken and accountability is not fixed in future promotions / upgrades and teachers take the job lightly. The attendance rate of children was very low 57.8 percent (boys-57.1% and girls 59.7). The urban areas recorded higher attendance rate of 64.3 percent (boys-64.3% and girls-65.8%), the attendance rate in rural areas was 56.5 percent (boys-55.1% and girls-57.8%).<sup>42</sup> The lower attendance rate explains the poor performance of achievement tests. The poor attendance rate in spite of the provision of mandatory 85 percent attendance rate for qualifying for stipend indicates poor state of affairs of reporting attendance and managing disbursement of stipend or benefiting without fulfilling the mandatory requirements. In all of this the purpose of stipend giving is lost. Thus strong

community monitoring is required. The PDEP-II must address the community ownership issues and delegate powers to the SMC/ PTA to have close and effective monitoring.

**Quality Output Indicators:**

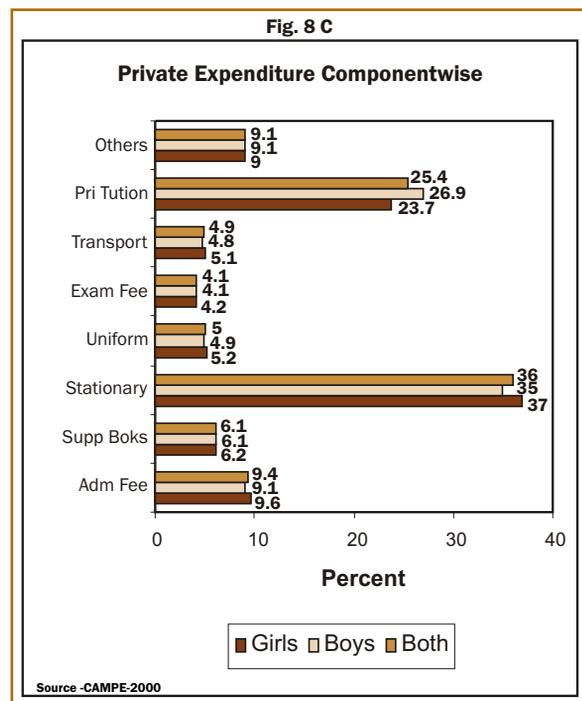
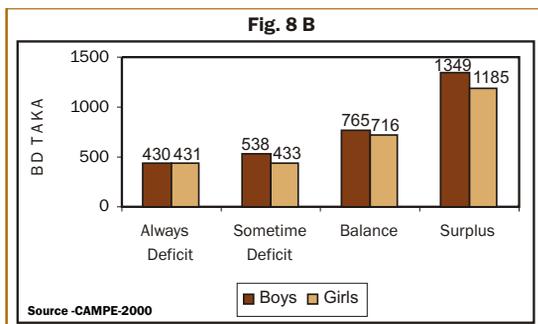
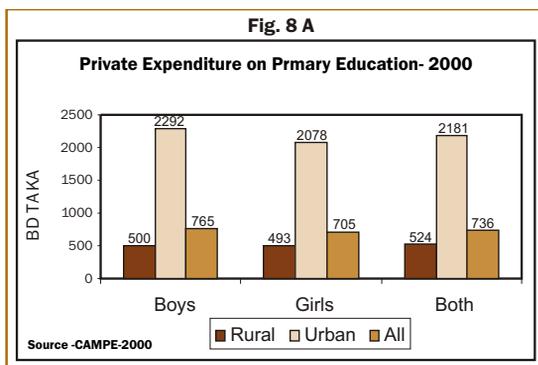
One of the major fallout of poor quality of education and extreme poverty of families is higher push-out/drop-out rates, high repetition rates and lower survival rates. The dropout rates<sup>43</sup> estimated by government sources depict some improvement but it still needs to be improved substantially. The drop out rates has decreased from 59.30% in 1991 to 33.0% in 2001 in primary classes. The EFA-GMR, 2005 survey indicated that drop-out rates were 34.5 percent (Boys-36.4% and girls 32.2%) in 2001, while the Education Watch- 2000 survey reported lower dropout rates of 24.3 percent (boys 26.5% and girls 23.8%). Thus the staggering dropout rates needs to be addressed effectively through quality input indicators.

Other quality output indicators like school life expectancy, repetition rates, and survival rates also indicated poor state of affairs. The repetition rate was 8.1% and 6.4% in 2001 according to the Education Watch-2000 survey and EFA-GMR-2005 survey respectively. Similarly the survival rate up to grade-V in 2000 was 65.5 percent (boys-63.4% and girls-67.8%) according to EFA GMR 2005. The Education Watch 2000 survey reported higher survival rate of 80.6 percent (78.5% for boys and 81% for girls). All the above figures point out poor state of primary education quality in Bangladesh and that significant effort are required to improve both the quality input and output indicators.

**Private Expenditure:**

Contrary to the belief that primary education is free in Bangladesh as projected by the government, the Education Watch report 2001, indicates per student expenditure for nine months was BD Tk 736 (US\$ 12) for primary level.<sup>44</sup> A significant rural urban variations were observed in the per student private expenditure at primary level. In the case of rural areas, per student expenditure was BD Tk. 524 (US\$ 8), while in the case of urban areas the per student expenditure BD Tk. 2181 (US\$ 34) for primary level.

The gender gap in per student expenditure was insignificant. The overall per student expenditure on boys was BD Tk. (US\$12), while it was BD Tk. 705 (US\$ 11) for girls. In case of rural areas the expenditure for boys was BD Tk 500 (US\$ 8) and BD Tk. 493 (US\$7). On the other hand the expenditure in urban areas was BD Tk. 2292 (US\$ 36) for boys and (US\$ 33) girls. (Fig 8 A)



The private expenditure on primary education among the socio-economic status groups indicated strong relationships. Mean private expenditure on primary education was BD Tk. 430 (US\$ 7) for families having “always food deficit”, BD Tk 492 (US\$ 7.74) for families having “sometimes deficit”, BD Tk. 741 (US\$ 12) for families having “balance food” and BD Tk. 1262 ( US\$ 20) for families with “surplus food”).<sup>45</sup> (Fig 8 B)

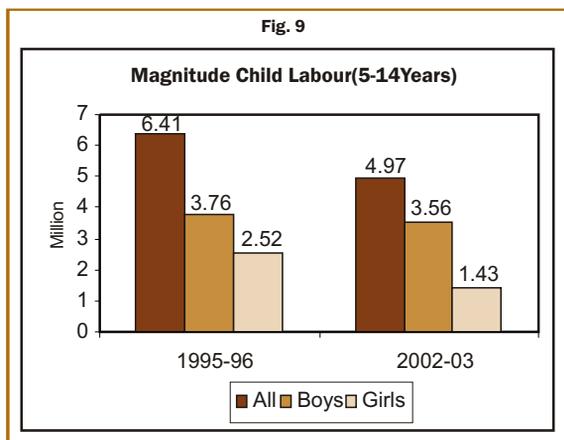
The component wise expenditure depicts that 36% of private expenditure on primary education is spent on stationery, 25 % on private tutors, 9 % on admission/ readmission and monthly tuition fees, 6% on buying textbooks and other supplementary books, 5% on school dress, 4% on examination fee, 5% on transport and 9% on other items.<sup>46</sup> The data from the field survey also reflected similar proportion of expenses under various heads, however proportion spent on private coaching was much higher, thereby suggesting that parents have started paying attention for improving quality education in the absence of available quality teaching in schools. (Fig 8 C)



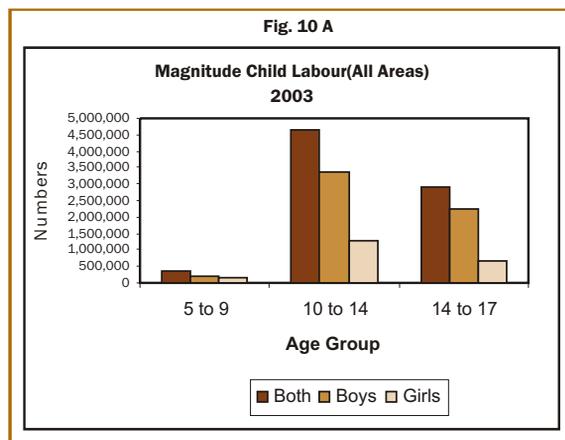
# SECTION II: CHILD LABOUR

## Magnitude:

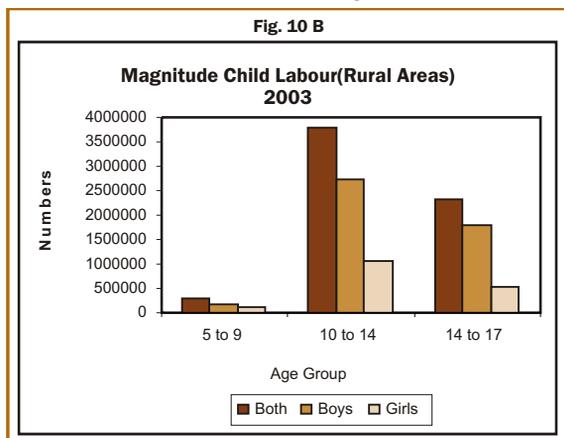
There are varying estimates of working children magnitude in Bangladesh due to differing concepts and methods of estimation.<sup>47</sup> Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics recorded 4.97 million working children (Boys-3.56 million and Girls 1.43 million) in 2002-03 in the age group of 5-14 years as compared to 6.41 million working children (Boys-3.76 million and girls-2.52 million) in 1995-96. The percent decline in child labour was 22.46 %, 5.51% and 43.35% for both boys and girls, only boys and only girls respectively during 1995-96 to 2002-03 (Fig 9). This indicates a substantial decline in girl child labour unlike in case of boys during the period. Majority of the girls were working in readymade garment factories prior to the MoU signed for releasing children from work in garment factories. Strict compliance of guidelines by the exporters for not allowing girls (who were major labour force in garment industry) to work below 14 years of age in export readymade garment reduced girl child labour.<sup>48</sup> Overall percent child labour to child population (aged 5-14 years) was 14.23 %, 19.51% and 22.73% for both, only boys and only girls respectively, while it was 17.5%, 20% and 11% for both, only boys and only girls for 5-17 age group.



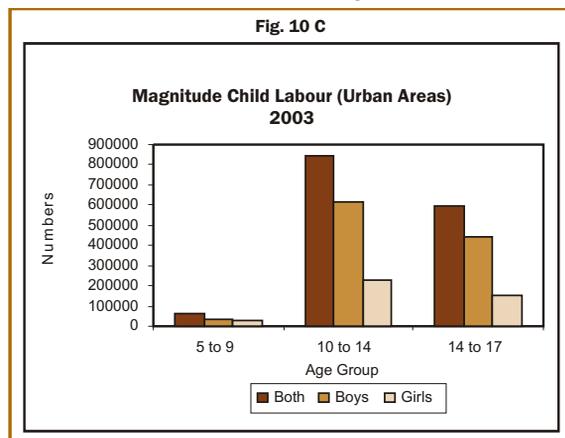
Source: Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics 2002-03



Source: Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics 2002-03



Source: Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics 2002-03



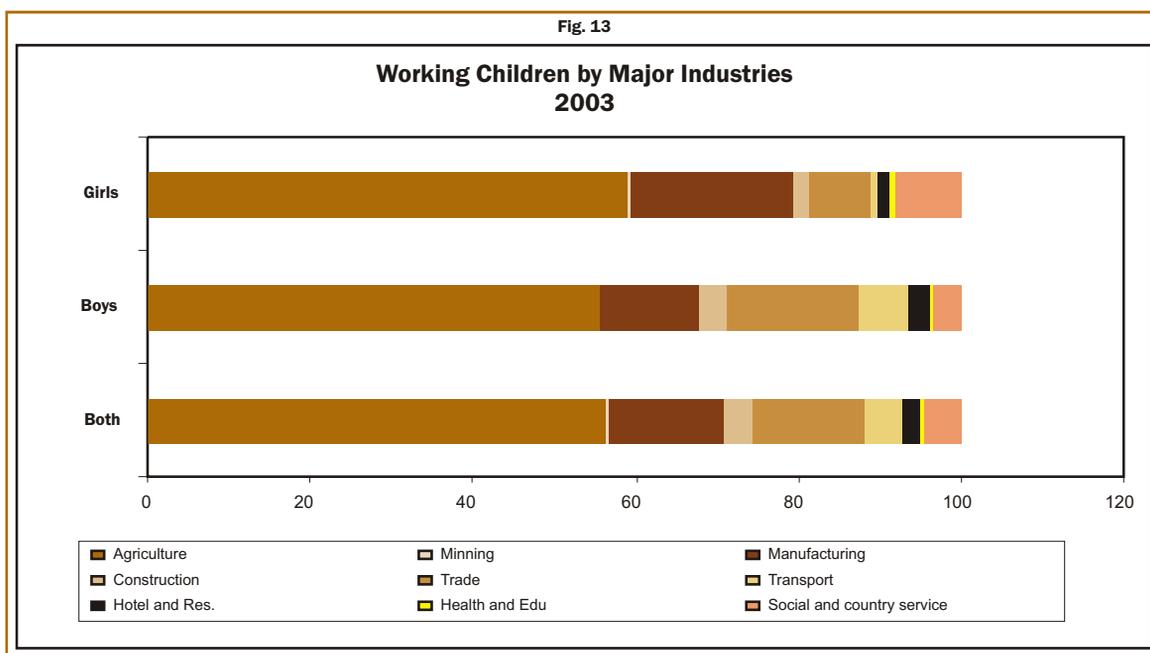
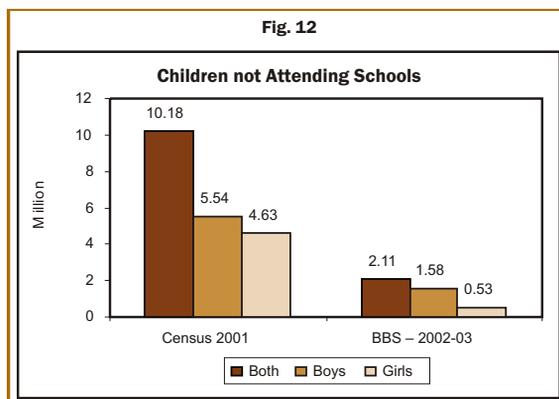
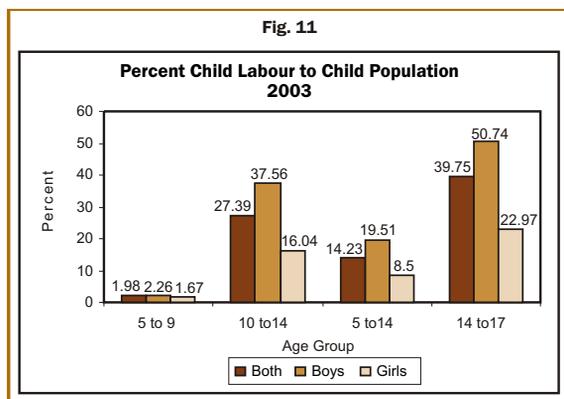
Source: Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics 2002-03

## Age Composition of Child Labour:

According to the BBS, 2002-03 census, about 360,000 working children were in 5-9 age groups, while 4.63 million children were in 10-14 age group and the rest 2.91 million children were in 15-17 age group (Fig 10 A, B and C). The distribution of all working children was 4.6%, 58.6% and 36.8% in the ages 5-9 years, 10-14 years and 15-17 years respectively.

The proportion of child labour to child population was 1.98%, 27.37% and 39.75% in the age group of 5-9 years, 10-14 years and 15-17 years respectively. In case of boys the proportion was 2.26%, 37.56% and 50.74%, while in case of girls the proportion was 1.67%, 16.04% and 22.73% for ages of 5-9 years, 10-14 years and 15-17 years respectively (Fig 11). The age and sex composition of working children reflect:

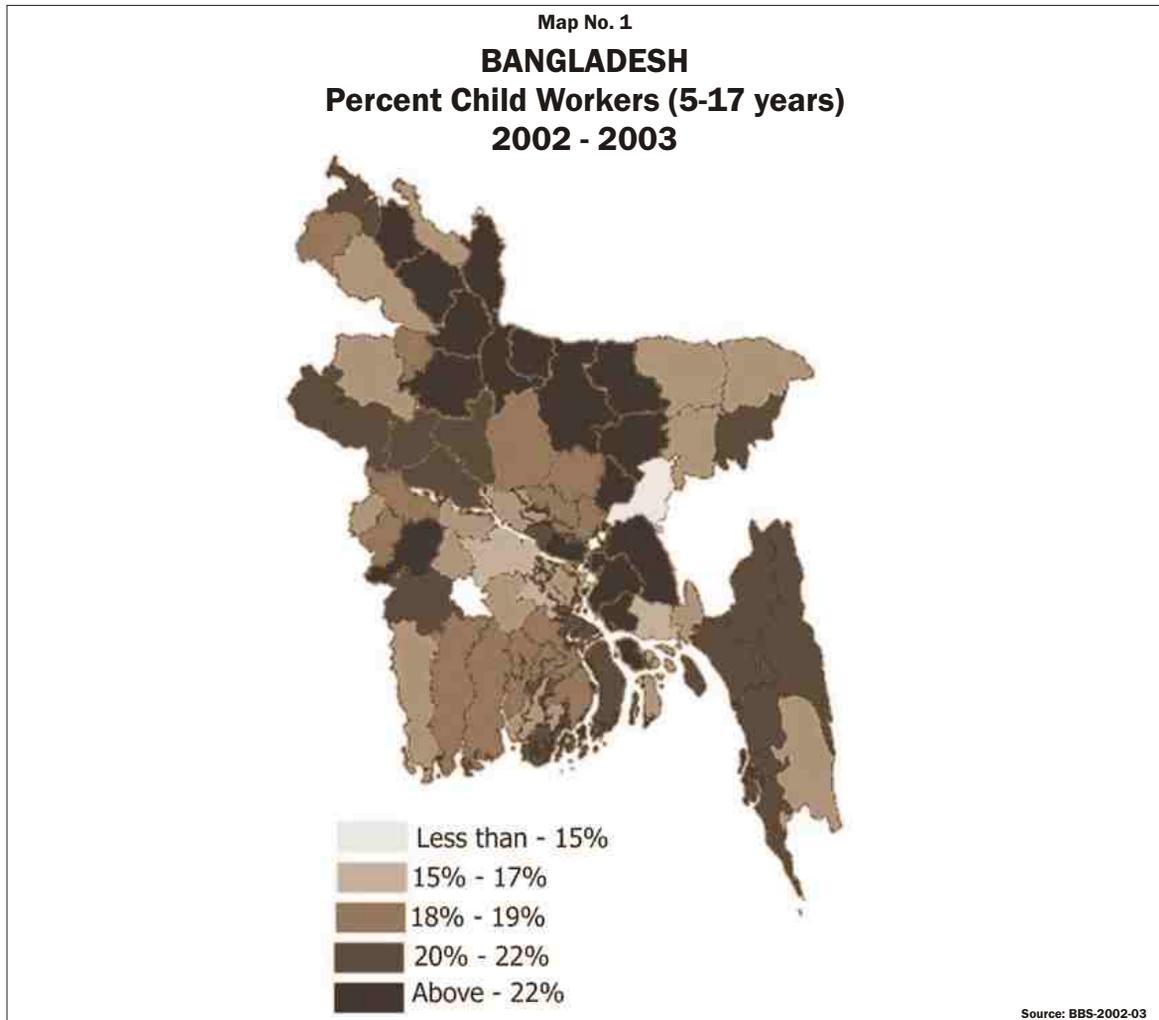
- ◆ Significant numbers of boys and girls child workers are even in below 10 years of age.
- ◆ Boys outnumber girls in significant proportion in both 10-14 and 15-17 age groups; however gender gap in work was significant for 14-17 age group.



In spite of tremendous efforts by government, United Nations and other international agencies and NGOs for universalizing primary and elementary education and removing children from work through education and other rehabilitative interventions, the results suggests that limited success was achieved as magnitude of child population did not decrease substantially. The results depicts that only education interventions without integrating poverty alleviation programmes in the policy have not yield the desired results of reducing child labour. The ROSC project has recognized that demand side interventions for education needs to be integrated to wean away children from work.

**Regional Pattern:**

The regional variation of child workers suggests that a high percent child worker to child population is found in Mymensing, Banderban and Jamalpur. (Map 1 and Table 3). Eighty one percent of the child workers aged



5-17 years were from rural areas.

**Magnitude of Out-of-School Children:**

All children not attending schools are potential child workers and they need to be addressed in a holistic framework. According to the Bangladesh Census 2001 there were 10.18 million children (5.54 million boys and 4.63 million girls) aged 6-14 years who were not attending schools.<sup>49</sup> The special census conducted in 2002-03 by the BBS for identifying child labourer returned only 2.11 million children (1.58 million boys and 0.52 million girls) aged 6-14 years who were not attending schools (Fig 12).<sup>50</sup> Thus during the period of 2 years a substantial number of 8 million children (3.96 million boys and 4.11 million girls) were supposed to be enrolled in schools. However the enrolment statistics data does not reflect this as the number of enrolments in primary schools has actually declined from 17.65 million to 17.46 million during 2001-2003. The Bangladesh government while submitting project proposal for Reaching Out-of-School Children (ROSC) to the World Bank has claimed that there were 3.5 million out-of-Oschool children aged 6-10 years in 2002.<sup>51</sup> In view of the above mentioned discrepancies, it is difficult to estimate the magnitude of out-of-school children in Bangladesh.

### Work Activities:

The proportion of children working in hazardous occupations<sup>52</sup> was 15.31% for children aged 5-17 years ( 1.21 million children) and 11.20 % for children aged 5-14 years (0.55 million children). Most of the working children are engaged in agricultural activities as wage labourers or cultivators, manufacturing, trade activities, transport, construction and other servicing and repairs activities (Fig 13). In terms of broad economic activities 56% children were working in agriculture, 18% in industry and 26% in service sector. The nature of employment was informal for 93.3% children and formal for 6.7%.<sup>53</sup> Working children are usually classified in terms of work situations in domestic work, non-domestic and non-monetary work, bonded labour work, wage work in hazardous and non-hazardous occupations and commercial sexual exploitation work. Each work situation has deep-rooted consequences on their human rights, healthcare and future economic production processes.

Average monthly income earned by the child was BD Tk. 1009 (US\$ 16). Gender gap in monthly earning was found as boys earned US\$ 16.6, while girls earned US\$ 12.75. The average work load was 29 hours per week; it varied from 31 hours per week for boys and 22 hours per week for girls.

### Case Study of Children Engaged in Welding Activity in Dakha City

Welding activities are mainly concentrated in urban areas. It is also found in thana/upazila headquarters and other growth centers and big market places within the thana/upazila. These activities include repairing/ manufacturing of steel furniture, automobiles and metallic products (steel furniture, doors, windows etc.). The welding machines (the machine which is used to unite two pieces of metals by melting with heat and then applying pressure) are used by the children even below 10 years of age. Serious health and safety hazards are there at the welding shops. Children working in welding shops/industries suffer from exposure to dust, fumes and combustion as well as from danger of losing eye sight. These activities are done in a shop or a fixed premise which is commonly known as welding shop or steel and engineering works. According to the BBS survey there were 28,290 welding establishment in Bangladesh employing 39,031 child labourers. About 12, 236 children workers were engaged in Dhaka city alone. Some of the reasons for employing children in welding were obedience by child workers as reason for recruitment, 'pay less wages', 'work can be made as and when required' and 'do good work' respectively. On an average a child works 43-59 hours per week. A significant number of children stay in the employer establishment, hence they are asked to work as per the demand with no fixed hours. On an average the child worker earns BD Tk 500-750 (US\$ 8-10) per month. A bare minimum protective wears are given to children while

### Hazardous Occupations

- ◆ Automobiles 15,923 children ( BBS - 2002-03 Survey)
- ◆ Battery 5513 children (BBS-2002-03 survey)
- ◆ Transport-30,585 children
- ◆ Welding 39,031 children
- ◆ Mining Mica and slate
- ◆ Manufacturing processes silk and other cotton weaving, leather tannery, welding.
- ◆ Construction- manual labour, brick making and chipping, stone breaking
- ◆ Service industries domestic services, transport and garages, hotels and restaurants, sexual abuse

*During my visit to Dhaka I found 7 children (aged between 9-12 years) working in one of the welding factory in Dhaka city.<sup>54</sup> They worked long hard hours (12-16 hour shift) seven days a week. Welding is a dangerous job. They earned average salary of BD Tk 650 to 800 (US\$ 10-13)*



**Child Worker in Welding Unit**



**Child Worker Chipping Bricks**



### **Child Labour Elimination: Government Policy and Initiatives**

An analysis of the domestic labour laws reveal that the provisions related to working children are, in many ways at par with the ILO conventions. Government of Bangladesh has ratified four ILO conventions including the ILO Convention No. 182. The record of prosecution and conviction of cases related to circumventing the child labour laws are very rare or even non-existent. Thus the government seems to be ineffective to book the offenders of the child labour laws. In December 2001, the Ministry of Labour and Employment took the initiative to begin developing a national policy on child labour that would constitute a policy foundation for the IPEC Time-Bound Programme (TBP) and contribute to the implementation of Bangladesh's obligations under the ILO Convention No. 182. A draft policy developed in consultation with national stakeholders is being examined by the Ministry.

A National Steering Committee (NSC) was constituted under the provisions of the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed in 1994. It includes members from the Ministry of Labour and Employment, the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Women and Children's Affairs, the Ministry of Social Welfare, the Ministry of Textile Manufacture, the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the NGO Affairs Bureau, employers' and workers' organizations, the ILO, and UNICEF. The aim of this MoU was to release children (especially girls) working in readymade garment industry throughout the country. A specific country programmes was developed with support from UN agencies and other international bi-lateral and multi-lateral agencies to provide both preventive, protective and rehabilitation measures.

### **IPEC-ILO Programme**

To rehabilitate the released children from work, IPEC activities in Bangladesh officially started in 1995 with the launch of the country programme. The overall development objective of the IPEC country programme was to identify good strategies and workable models to combat child labour and to build the capacity of the Government, employers, and workers' organizations, NGOs, and other social partners to deal with the problems of child labour and its gradual elimination from society and to protect working people by promoting and realizing fundamental principles and rights at work and to eliminate child labour from the country. IPEC developed strategies and models to determine what interventions could contribute to combating child labour effectively. Interventions varied from preventing children from entering the labour market to withdrawing children from hazardous work and finding ways to rehabilitate them; monitoring of workplaces; raising awareness and capacity building of the partner organizations. During this time, 75 action programmes have been implemented under the IPEC country programme in Bangladesh through the Government, NGOs, and employers' and workers' organizations. So far, more than 50,000 children have benefited directly or indirectly from these programmes. Majority of these programmes provide financial support to NGOs for "Learning Centers" where working children from urban slum are enrolled for life skills and for imparting basic language and numeric skills. However in majority of cases, these children do not continue education in the formal schools after completing the NFE schooling due to family pressure to provide income support to families. Efforts should have been made to mainstream these working children in formal schools by the NGOs.

### **World Bank, UN and Other Donor Agencies:**

The World Bank system, UN agencies and other international donor agencies support government of Bangladesh and a large number of NGOs in developing micro projects for releasing child labour from hazardous occupations and providing educational support to released children and develop capacity building and provide livelihood support to families through vocational training. These donor agencies have developed successful partnership with government to create the environment for broad based conducive conditions for improving access, infrastructure and quality of education, which is an essential element of the process of eliminating child labor. The World Bank and ADB have provided credit for PDEP and PDEP-II projects, while substantial grant is given for ROSC project. Major objective of the projects was improving physical access to schools, developing infrastructure, supporting quality and learning outcomes and supporting policy change and capacity building. The international agencies like; UN UNICEF, European Union, European Commission, Dfid, SIDA, SDA, NORAD, GTZ, DANIDA, RNE, NOVIB, Australian Aid and other

donor have supported several intervention of government and NGOs projects ( Refer Table 1). UNICEF has been actively engaged in providing basic education support for “Hard to reach Urban Children” which is a joint project of GoB and UNICEF. It supports Learning Centres (LCs) through DNFE. These LCs are operationalised by NGOs. The project was completed in 2004. (Refer Table 1). Another “Hard to Reach Urban children” project is being implemented by the end of 2005 by the UNICEF and GoB to cover about one million child workers in major cities of Bangladesh. The “learning Centers- NFE schools” in the urban slum areas are operationalised by NGOs with financial support from UNICEF and other international donor agencies. The support is provided for several components.( Refer Table No.1).

**Non-Governmental Organizations and Civil Society Response:**

NGO movement in Bangladesh has been very strong in creating pressure on government to address the social development issues and create awareness for child rights. Bangladesh Shishu Adhikar Forum (a joint NGOs forum for child rights in Bangladesh) has been actively raising the child rights issues to provide legal, preventive, protective and rehabilitative support to working children. Majority of the NGOs have demonstrated project based approach in Bangladesh. The main focus has been to provide educational and vocational training support to out-of-school children, through bridge course/ camp schools/ non formal schools and mainstream the children in formal schools. Several NGOs also provide specialised vocational skills to the older child workers in order to help them seek decent employments. The major NGOs working in Bangladesh for child labour education and vocational training are:

**BRAC:** It provides non-formal education to out-of-school children aged 8-10 years for 4 years. An average cohort of 33 out-of-school children preferably from illiterate and economically disadvantaged families is enrolled in BRAC, NFE schools, to reach them up to level of class V. These children are mainstreamed in the formal schools after completing the full course of the NFE. A total of 34,481 BRAC NFE schools are in operation throughout Bangladesh either directly or through other NGOs under the Education Support Programme of BRAC. About one million children complete full cycle of primary education over a period of 4 years from these schools.<sup>55</sup>

**GSS Primary Education Programme:** The children are taught up to grade 5. A major emphasis of the GSS is on the education of slum children. It aim is to prepare learners as independent readers while they are in grade 1, prepare learners as creative writers by achieving independence of thought and the ability to present their own ideas in writing, enable children to become numerate, create a real and lasting interest in books and other printed matter and take pupils to the standard of grade 5 of the formal system. About 750 GSS schools were in operation during its peak period.

**CMES Technology School:** The Centre for Mass Education in Science (CMES), a science- and technology-oriented NGO, has initiated this programme. In grades 1-2, pupils are provided general education; in grades 4-5, some science lessons are included covering environment, popular science and technology. The aim is to make people conscious of the importance and impact of science education in real life.

**Dhaka Ahsania Mission Alternative Primary School Programme:** Children of 8-12 years are the target group. The course duration is 27 months with 3 grades, each of 9 months. The school premises are provided by the local community. It also provides specialised technical vocational training to older students in different vocations which are in demand in the respective areas.

**UCEP School:** The Under-privileged Children's Programme for School is a specialised programme designed for working children in the age group 6-14 years. The duration of this programme is 7 years. It is a mixture of general and technical education and vocational training. After completion of 7 years schooling, specialised vocational training is imparted to older children, so they can become productive and gain decent employment opportunities.

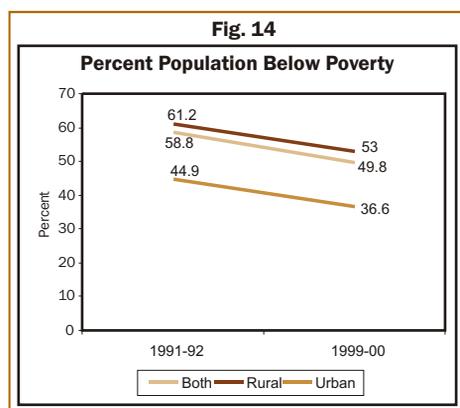
**Population Services and Training Centre (PSTC) ARIZE Centers:** The project is for under-privileged urban working children and currently 12 LCs are in operation in Dhaka city. The children are provided 3 hours of basic life-skill education, that they can seek their due entitlements in the work premises, as majority of them continue to work after the education lessons provided in the Lsc.

## SECTION III:

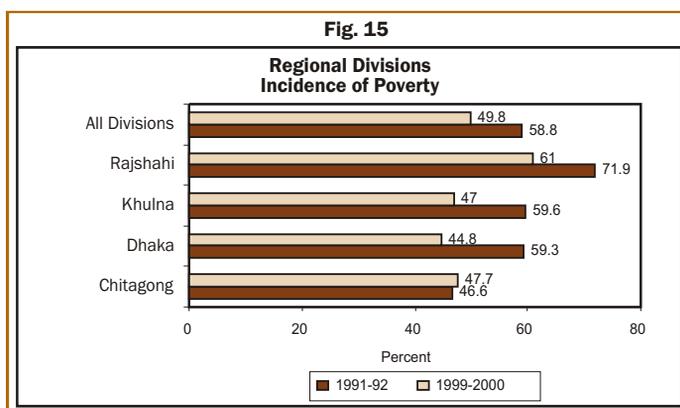
## POVERTY SITUATION

## Poverty Index:

Bangladesh has made marginal progress in reducing income poverty as the overall incidence of poverty decreased from 58.8 percent in 1991-92 to 49.8 percent in 2000, signifying a modest decline rate of one percentage point per annum (Fig 14). The overall GDP growth was averaging 5 per cent and per capita growth averaging 3.3 per cent per annum during 1991-2000. According to official (Planning Commission) figures, 63 million people (50 per cent population), still live below the country's poverty line in 2000, out of which 1/3<sup>rd</sup> are hard core or in extreme poverty situation.<sup>56</sup> An estimated 85 percent of the country's poor 53.5 million were living in rural areas.



Source: Planning Commission, Bangladesh HDR-2000



Source: Planning Commission, Bangladesh HDR-2000

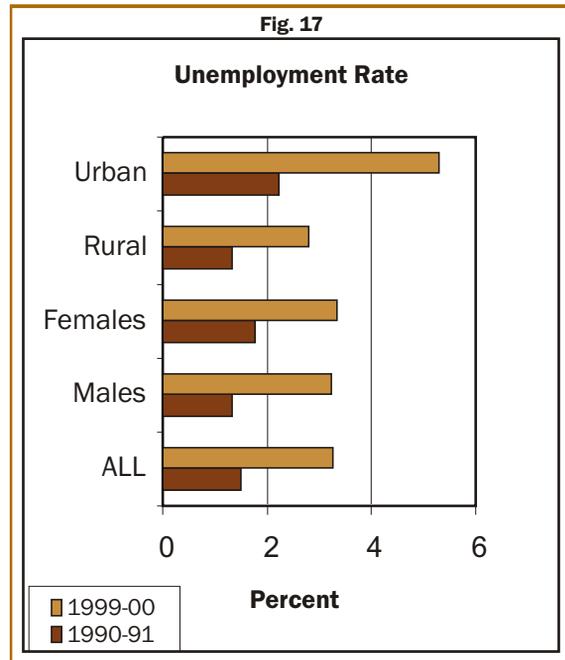
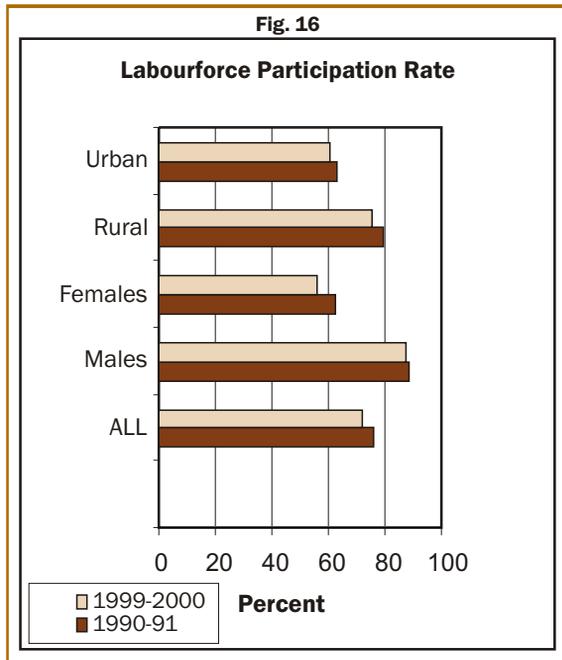
The results derived from the survey indicate that progress in reducing the head-count index of poverty was better in urban areas, but the rural areas displayed better progress in reducing the depth and severity of poverty as captured by trends in poverty gaps and squared poverty gap respectively (Table No.3). Inequalities existed in the share of income/consumption among different stratum. The share of lowest 20 percent population quintile was only 9 percent, while the share of highest 20 percent quintile was 41.3 percent. This inequality is again reflected by the Gini's coefficient which increased considerably from 0.259 to 0.306 during 1991-92 to 1999-2000. The inequality increase was more in urban areas as compared to rural areas. The level of consumption expenditure inequality increased from 30.7 to 36.8 percent in urban areas, and from 24.3 to 27.1 percent for rural areas.<sup>57</sup>

A study of 8,212 households in ten upazilas representing whole of Bangladesh conducted by the CAMPE in 2003-04 indicated that 3.2%, 19.9%, 45% and 31.9% households were "always in food deficit, sometime in food deficit, break-even situation and surplus food security" respectively.<sup>58</sup> The study supports the view that Poverty eradication in Bangladesh requires targeted approach for equity based social and economic growth. Although a lot of activities related to micro-credit for poor people are being undertaken with support from NGOs like BRAC, Grameen bank etc; yet the majority of beneficiaries have defaulted in repaying the loans due to incapacity to generate income. This has further increased the child labour situation in Bangladesh. Hence capacity building measures of the beneficiaries need to be given priority, so that income generating capacities are strengthened.

The regional pattern of poverty incidence depicts uneven performance as Rajshahi division returned 61% poverty incidence as compared to 45% for Dhaka division (Fig 15). Behind these figures are human faces, human pain and suffering and a moral duty to make poverty a thing of the past and create equity in development programmes. Average growth per capita expenditure also indicates uneven patterns as Dhaka division registered highest percent increase of 3.2 while Chittagong had only 1.5% growth during 1991-92 to 1999-2000.<sup>59</sup>

**Labour force, employment and unemployment:**

During the period 1991-2000 to 1999-2000, the percentage of persons in the labour force at the national level declined from 75.9 per cent to 71.1 per cent. For the males this declined from 88.3 per cent to 87.3 per cent and for the females from 62.6 per cent to 55.9 per cent during this period. The reasons for such decline could be attributed to changes in the demographic patterns (Fig 16). Incidence of unemployment has increased at the national level from 1.50 per cent in 1991-92 to 3.27 per cent in 1999-2000. There was an increase in the incidence of unemployment both for males and females on the whole and in particular for urban areas. (Fig 17)

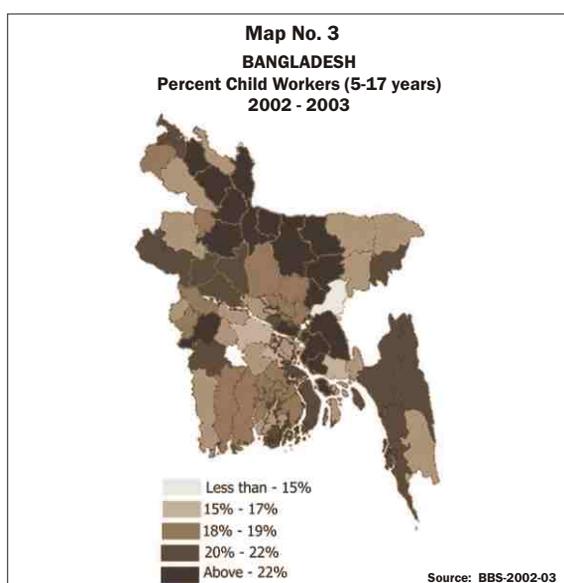
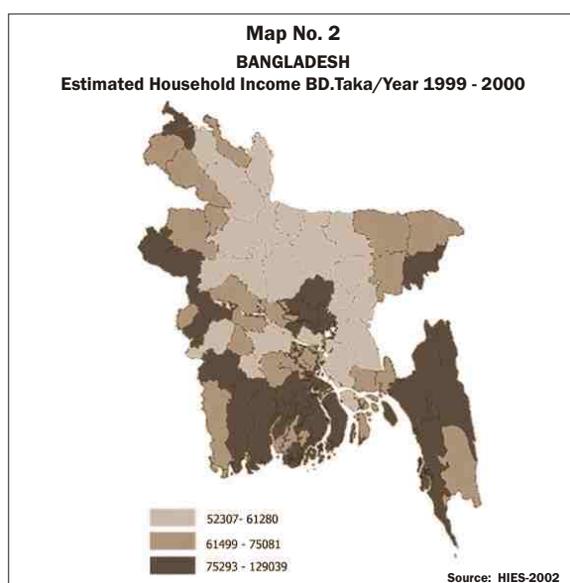


## SECTION IV:

## CHILD LABOUR- HUMAN DEPRIVATION LINKAGES

Attempts to curb child labour in Bangladesh are failing miserably as poverty and social ignorance continue to drive children to work. According to the child labour survey 1995-96 conducted by the BBS “about 2/3<sup>rd</sup> (67.8%) of the working children were engaged in economic activity due to economic hardship of their parents”.<sup>60</sup> The survey also pointed out that 54% and 27% father's of the working children were engaged as self-employed and day labourer activity respectively. The survey pointed out that the perceived cause underlying the phenomena of child labour include poverty and unemployment, distress migration and general lack of interest in education due to poor quality of education. The study results also indicates that general tendency is to replace adult labour especially women labour by the child labour. This is corroborated with a significant decline in women labour force participation.

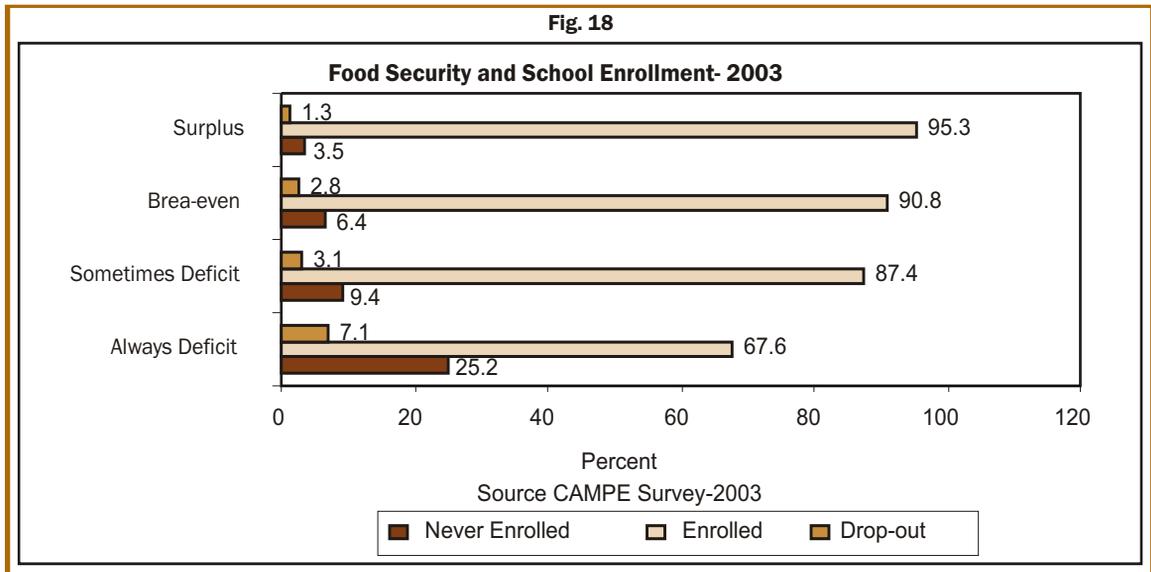
Close association was observed between annual average household incomes and percent child workers. Areas with low annual income levels were having high proportion of child workers (Refer Map 1 and 2). Coefficient of correlation between the two indicators was high negative (-0.6587 and 0.05 percent level of significance), suggesting close relationship between poverty and child labour presence.



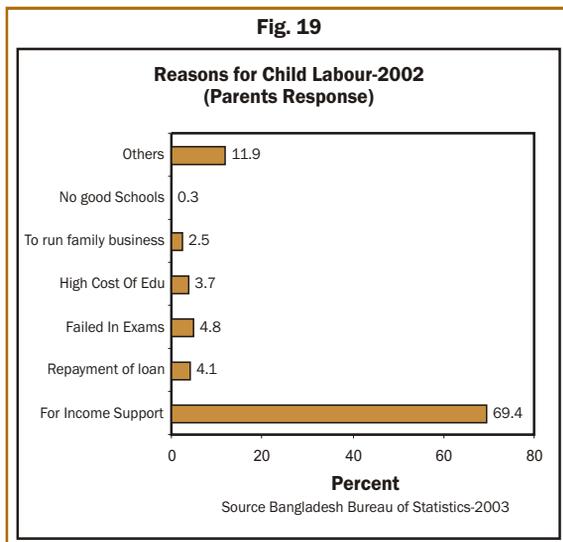
Close association has been also observed between the food security situations (which depicts the poverty status of families) with non-enrolment and high drop-out rates from schools. About 25% children were never enrolled in schools from “Always deficit” households, while only 3.5% children were never enrolled from “Surplus food” households. Similarly the dropout rates were much higher for the “Always deficit” households (Fig 18).<sup>61</sup> The reasons ascertained from the surveyed child workers parent's for engaging children for work, reflect poverty as major cause for pushing children for labour. Sixty nine percent working children were supporting family income, 4.1% children were engaged to repay loan, 4.8% were unsuccessful in examinations and 3.7% were unable to bear educational expenses (Fig 19).<sup>62</sup> Thus the survey (BBS survey report on child labour 2002-03) reinforces the observations that unless steps are taken to alleviate poverty measures and improve livelihood opportunities, very little can be

achieved through education initiative only for the extremely poverty stricken households.

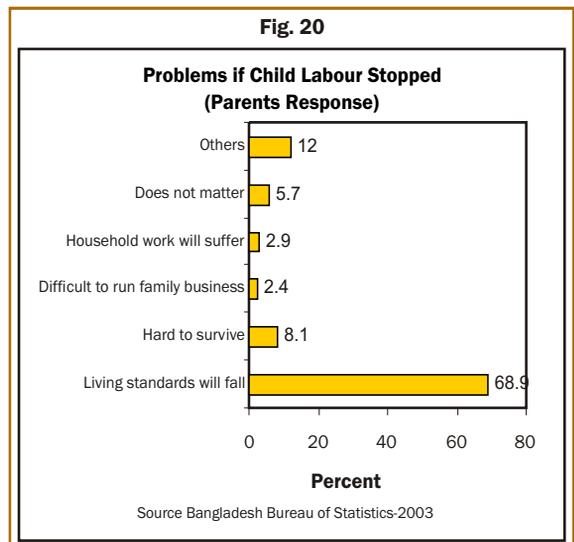
Answer to a specific question asked by the survey “What type of problems will be faced by parents if child stops work?” revealed that “living standards will fall” (69%), “ Hard to Survive” (8.1%), “ Difficult to run family business” (2.4%) and “ Household work will suffer” ( 2.9%).<sup>63</sup> (Fig 20) All these point out that poverty alleviation is simultaneously required along with education initiatives.



Source: BBS-2002-03



Source: BBS-2002-03



Source: BBS-2002-03

This supports the assertion that poverty is the key reason for perpetuation of child labor. However on the other hand child labor is the primary cause of poverty, as it pushes children early to premature work thereby denying children the opportunity to acquire the education and skills they need to obtain decent work and incomes as adults. The links are mostly straightforward and tend to run both ways. Poverty and lack of education provision constitute the principal common grounds. Even the latest ILO study reveals that children only earn 20 percent income of an adult earning, while cost-benefit analysis for educating a child works out seven times returns.

### Multivariate Analysis:

The results of a multivariate analysis of the independent contribution of different set of phenomena on child labour under taken by Nath and Hadi<sup>64</sup> reflects a combination of factors like education level of child, education level of mother and father, non-availability of land and agricultural labour occupation of family, all together contributed 67 percent for existence of child labour in Bangladesh.

### Results and Analysis:

The study suggests that combination of factors work together for prevalence of child labour. The factors identified through the analysis were education deprivation of the child and parents, food deficit at home, unemployment status of family members and landlessness of family. The messages are loud and clear that child labour cannot be eliminated unless multi pronged steps are taken simultaneously like: strategy of making schools accessible, providing quality education in schools, attacking food deficit scenario at home through poverty alleviation programmes and providing employment to adults.



BRAC - School

SECTION V:

# SUMMING UP, RESULTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The study on child labour, elementary education and poverty situation in Bangladesh depicts the following results and outcomes.

## Primary Education Issues:

- About 10.18 million children aged 6-14 years were not attending any educational institutions (Bangladesh Census 2001). Another government survey (The Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics-2002-03) returned 2.12 million out-of-school children aged 6-14 years. The enrolments statistics for the primary education recoded decline from 18.36 million in 1998 to 17.46 million in 2003. Thus there exists a grate anomaly in the three government source of data.
- In spite of huge number of out-of-school children, enrolments have actually declined during 1998-2003 indicating government has no action plan to enroll all out-of-school children. It is therefore important that the government brings out a realistic road map to enroll all out-of-school children in primary and junior schools. The PDEP-II, ROCH and “Hard to Reach urban children” projects only marginally address the magnitude of out-of-school children and child labourers.
- The PDEP-II (Bangladesh Action Plan for EFA) has stipulated 18 per cent allocation (out of US\$ 1815 million) for infrastructure development which seems low in view of huge magnitude of out-of-school children, as the existing infrastructure in terms of buildings and classrooms are few. The new expected enrolments will increase student/ classroom ratio tremendously.
- Public expenditures on education as a percentage of GDP were mere 2.4 per cent in 2002, which is very low in view of the expected norm of 6 percent of GDP. Similarly the percentage of total government expenditure on education sector was mere 13 percent in 2003-04, which was on the lower side of the range of public education spending of low-income countries. The percent allocation of education budget for primary education has actually decreased from 46% to 33% indicating more priority for higher education.
- Even the public expenditure depicted marginal variations among different stratum of population groups. The expenditure on lowest 20 percent quintile was 22 percent while it was 14 per cent for highest 20 percent quintile. This reflects that in spite of policy programmes for supporting poorest section through incentives like stipend, yet the poorest section did not receive the required education expenditures. Hence promoting access to extreme poorest section was not visible. Thus the delivery mechanism of the stipend scheme or other schemes for children of marginalized communities needs effective control, so as to reach the targeted children
- Average annual public expenditure on primary education per enrolled student was mere US\$ 23 in 2004, which depicts the poor state of public expenditure on primary education in Bangladesh. The low budget on education has significantly affected the infrastructure and quality component of education.
- Contrary to the belief that primary education is free in Bangladesh, per student private expenditure for nine months was (US\$ 12) for primary level. A significant rural/urban variations were observed in the per student private expenditure at primary level.
- Primary education in Bangladesh is delivered through two systems: (a) the formal system and (b) the non-formal system. Ninety eight percent students receive education through formal system. There are eleven types of primary schools in Bangladesh. Six of these are “mainstream” schools, which implement the government's National Curriculum and Textbook Board (NCTB) curriculum and textbooks. The other schools provide non-formal education; these schools are run by NGOs. Significant variations in the building structure, infrastructure, pupil/ teacher ratio, student/ classroom ratio were found between the government, non-government, Madrasa and non-formal type of schools.
- Only Forty-eight percent schools were government primary schools, while the rest of the schools were registered non-governmental schools and other types which are partly funded by the government. A

significant proportion of 39 percent students were enrolled in non-government and other primary schools. Due to independent status of majority of the non-governmental schools, limited influence is exerted by the government to adopt national curriculum and national standards in recruitment of teachers and training to teachers. Hence standardization of national curriculum and maintaining quality is major requirement in Bangladesh.

- The number of primary schools and enrolments in primary schools has actually decreased during 1998-2003. Average number of primary schools per Gram (village) was 1.02, while it was 1.15 for one revenue village. However primary school per village varied from 0.60 in case of Rajshahi and Chitagong division to 2.12 for Dhaka and Barisal division.
- contrary to general view that non-formal schooling through NGOs is significant in Bangladesh the data did not support the perception, as 98 percent primary school children aged 5-17 years were seeking education through formal school system while only the rest 2 percent were taught in non-formal NGO schools or at home/ family or through government non-formal education programmes. Majority of the NGO schools provide primary education only to a cohort of 33 students over a period of four years per school. Thus effective coverage of primary students by the NGOs schools is limited.
- The child population threshold (Number of children whether enrolled or not enrolled in primary schools aged 6-10 years) per primary school was 219 for the country. In view of a large number of registered and non-registered non-governmental schools which have inappropriate building structure, infrastructure and other services, the child population threshold results demand substantial development of building infrastructure to cope with the demand of enrolments and provide access with equity for primary education.
- Bangladesh recorded a GER of 96 percent, while NER was hovering around 78-85 percent. Regional variation in NER were observed, as the NER was lower in Rajshahi and Chitagong divisions and even in slum areas of Dhaka and other metropolitan centers.
- Bangladesh has achieved the near gender parity enrolment goal in primary education, with GPI of 0.97 and this was positively correlated with a large proportion of lady teacher recruitments.
- Infrastructure in terms of buildings, and quality input indicators like, pupil/ teacher ratio, student's classroom ratio and availability of trained teachers were much below the minimum standards in majority of schools in Bangladesh. The training provided to teachers were not sufficient to improve the achievement levels of students, as only 2 per cent students had achieved all teaching competencies, indicating poor performance of teachers to provide effective supervision to students .
- Average effective teaching hours per day were very low due to two shift system in the schools with same teachers in view of less number of classrooms, which forced authorities to have two shifts in the schools. Moreover teachers were also engaged non-academic activities, like government data collection, maintenance of records etc.
- Accountability of teachers to improve the quality needs direct involvement of community in school management. Capacity building of the school management committee needs to be up scaled in order to prepare them for undertaking the task of monitoring, supervision and preparing educational plans. Currently very little inputs are provided by the community in plan formulations and supervision. Thus community ownership of schools is not visible.
- The quality output indicators reflect very poor competency achievements by children, high dropout rates, lower attendance rates and lower transition rates. On average 20-25 percent children aged 7-10 years were not attending schools and a large proportion of children aged 10-14 years drop-out of schools. Lower attendance rates were in spite of the mandatory requirement of 85 percent attendance required for qualifying to receive stipend.
- There is an increasing necessity for a shift of paradigm focus to question of quality in school education. The result of poor quality of education explains high dropouts, low retention, attendance, transition and survival rates in government school.

### **Child Labour Issues:**

- Bangladesh has a very high proportion of child labourer to child population (14% for children aged 5-14 years and 18% for children aged 5-17 years) The official data (BBS-2002-03, survey) returned 4.97 million child labourers aged 5-14 years and 7.9 million child labourers aged 5-17 years. The government

road map through the two projects, ROCH project and “Hard to reach urban children project” only marginally addresses these numbers of child labourers.

- About 360,000 working children were in 5-9 age groups, while 4.63 million children were in 10-14 age group and the rest 2.91 million children were in 15-17 age group. The distribution of working children was 4.6%, 58.6% and 36.8% in the ages 5-9 years, 10-14 years and 15-17 years respectively. The proportion of child labour to child population was 1.98%, 27.37% and 39.75% in the age group of 5-9 years, 10-14 years and 15-17 years respectively.
- High percent child worker to child population is found in Mymensing, Banderban and Jamalpur. Eighty one percent of the child workers aged 5-17 years were from rural areas.
- About 1.21 million children (15% of child labourers) aged 5-17 years were engaged in hazardous occupations like in automobile industry, battery , welding, transport, mining, manufacturing etc;. However girl children working in readymade garment industry have declined significantly due to pressure from importers as well as the MoU signed by different government departments and the UN agencies with Trade union for not engaging children in this industry
- The prosecution and conviction rates in contravention of Child Labour legislations were few pointing out poor implementation of the legislations, due to administrative lapses and lacunae in the legislations.
- The current national programmes like ROCH, IPEC and Hard to Reach Urban Children projects for supporting released child labourers from work has very little synergy and coordination at the grassroots level with other welfare and poverty alleviation programmes. In the absence of such synergy, the enrolled children in the special schools do not complete full cycle of elementary education. Thus providing schooling without integrating other poverty alleviation programmes for the extreme poor families have not been successful. Moreover, the scale of coverage of these projects and the magnitude of child labour are mismatch and needs substantial scaling up.

### Poverty, labour force and unemployment Issues:

- According to official (Planning Commission) figures, 63 million people (50 per cent population of Bangladesh), still live below the country's poverty line in 2000, out of which 1/3rd are hard core or in extreme poverty situation. Inequalities existed in the share of income/consumption among different stratum. The share of lowest 20 percent population quintile was only 9 percent, while the share of highest 20 percent quintile was 41.3 percent. An estimated 85 percent of the country's poor 53.5 million were living in rural areas. Significantly majority of these rural areas like Banderban, Mymensing, Rangpur, Rangamati, Jamalpur etc had very high concentration of child labour and out-of-school children.
- The regional pattern of poverty incidence depicts uneven performance as Rajshahi division returned 61% poverty incidence as compared to 45 % for Dhaka division. Close association was observed between annual household incomes and percent child workers. Areas with low annual income levels were having high proportion of child workers. Coefficient of correlation between the two indicators was high negative (-0.6587 and 0.05 percent level of significance), suggesting close relationship between poverty and child labour presence.
- The percentage of persons in the labour force at the national level declined from 75.9 per cent to 71.1 per cent. For the males this declined from 88.3 per cent to 87.3 per cent and for the females from 62.6 per cent to 55.9 per cent during this 1991-92 to 1999-2000. Incidence of unemployment has increased at the national level from 1.50 per cent in 1991-92 to 3.27 per cent in 1999-2000. There was an increase in the incidence of unemployment both for males and females on the whole and in particular for urban areas.

### Child Labour- Human Deprivation Linkages:

- Multivariate analysis with support from the empirical data depicts education deprivation of the child and parents, food deficit at home, non-availability of land and agricultural labour occupation of family, all together contributed 67 percent for existence of child labour in Bangladesh.
- The empirical study reflected households with “Always food deficit at home” (proxy indicator for poverty) also recoded high proportion of child workers, out of school children and dropout rates from schools as compared to the households having “Break-Even or Surplus food at homes”.

- Answer to a specific question asked by the survey “What type of problems will be faced by parents if child stops work?” revealed that “living standards will fall” (69%), “ Hard to Survive” (8.1%), “ Difficult to run family business” (2.4%) and “ Household work will suffer” ( 2.9%)<sup>2</sup>. All these point out that poverty alleviation is simultaneously required along with education initiatives. This supports the assertion that poverty is the key reason for perpetuation of child labor. However on the other hand child labor is the primary cause of poverty, as it pushes children early to premature work thereby denying children the opportunity to acquire the education and skills they need to obtain decent work and incomes as adults. The links are mostly straightforward and tend to run both ways. Poverty and lack of education provision constitute the principal common grounds. Even the latest ILO study reveals that children only earn 20 percent income of an adult earning, while cost-benefit analysis for educating a child works out seven times returns.

### Recommendations:

#### For International Community:

- MDGs and child labor are intimately linked. The links are mostly straightforward and tend to run both ways. Poverty and lack of education provision constitute the principal common grounds. Indeed, it is poverty associated with social injustice and social exclusion that is most closely related to child labor. The absence of child labor from the MDG framework is a regrettable omission that needs to be corrected with a sense of urgency if the intent is to achieve the MDGs.
- Achieving the MDG and Dakar goals for poverty alleviation and universalization of primary and elementary education within the target time, would require scaling up of public investments, capacity building, domestic resource mobilization, and official development assistance. In view of the need for resource mobilization, high-income countries should increase official development assistance (ODA) to support the Millennium Development Goals, particularly in low-income countries, with improved ODA quality (including aid that is harmonized, predictable, and largely in the form of grants-based budget support). Each donor should reach 0.7 percent no later than 2015 to support the Goals and other development assistance priorities.
- International donors should identify more MDG "fast-track" countries for a rapid scale-up of official development assistance (ODA) in view of recognizing that many countries including Bangladesh are already in a position for a massive scale-up on the basis of their governance and absorptive capacity.
- Organizations that fund development projects in India, including the World Bank, should routinely include in all contracts a clause, enforceable by canceling the project, requiring compliance with international labor standards or domestic labor laws, whichever are higher. The World Bank should conduct a comprehensive review of all of its projects in Bangladesh to determine whether child labor is in any way involved, directly or indirectly, and make the results public.
- Bodies such as the International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC), U.S. Department of Labor, the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), U.N. agencies, and others that fund projects aimed at reducing child labour should insist that local governments in the areas where their projects operate enforce the child and bonded labour laws, and should contribute resources for capacity building, and technical assistance to local governments to adequately enforce those laws.

#### For Government of Bangladesh:

- Standardization of national curriculum and maintaining quality of teaching must be given top priority in view of multiple systems of primary education.
- Incorporate multi-pronged approach by crafting effective synergy and coordination process between government departments towards child labour elimination efforts. The governments should internalize the linking up processes of poverty alleviation, health support and primary and mass education in a unified manner to eliminate child labour supply.
- The delivery mechanism of public expenditure incentives for the targeted children must be effectively coordinated and monitored, so as to reach the most vulnerable rural communities, especially child labour and their families.

- The PDEP-II would require scaling up of public investments/ budgets through domestic resource mobilization and official development assistance for improving school infrastructure, quality of teaching and school environments, to ensure full implementation of compulsory education Act for providing free and compulsory quality education to all children below 14 years.
- Review of the PDEP-II and ROCH projects and incorporate more budgetary allocations, in view of the 10.18 million out-of-school children aged 6-14 years as estimated by the Census- 2001. The government should bring out a realistic road map to enroll all out-of-school children in primary and junior schools. The PDEP-II, ROCH and “Hard to Reach urban children” projects only marginally address the magnitude of out-of-school children and child labourers.
- The government of Bangladesh should take all possible steps to enforce the the ratified ILO convention no. 182 and other existing child labor legislations. A synergy of actions with the labour department should internalize in the ROCH project.

**Table No. 1**  
**International Support Primary Education 1995-2005**  
**Donor and Projects**

Agency	Primary Education			NGOs		Urban	Children
	Curriculum	Training	Construction	Policy and Dev.	Community Mobilization		
IDA	PEDP IDEAL	PEDP IDEAL	PEDP	PEDP IDEAL	PEDP IDEAL		
WUSC/ Canada	IDEAL	IDEAL		IDEAL	IDEAL		
NORAD		PEDPQ1		PEDPQ1		UCEP	
Dfid		ESTEEM		ESTEEM		UCEP Proshika, BRAC	NFE
GTZ, KfW	CPEP	CPEP	CPEP		CPEP		
ADB	SPESP IDEAL	SPESP IDEAL	SPESP	SPESP PSPMP IDEAL	SPESP IDEAL		
EU		PROMOTE					
JICA	Sci. Edu						
DANIDA						UCEP	
SDC						UCEP CAMPE CMES	
SIDA	IDEAL	IDEAL		IDEAL	IDEAL	ADP	
NOVIB						Proshika, BRAC	
EC						Proshika, BRAC	NFE
CIDA						Proshika, BRAC	NFE
Unicef	IDEAL	IDEAL		IDEAL	IDEAL		NFE
Aus. Aid	IDEAL	IDEAL		IDEAL	IDEAL		
RNE						CAMPE	NFE

Source: Bangladesh Education Sector Review USAID, Working with Government Agencies, June 2002

PEDP: Primary Education Development Project- Department of Primary and Mass Education ( Govt. of Bangladesh)

IDEAL: Train teachers in "multiple ways of teaching" and interactive methods, continuous assessment; mobilizes community support, strengthen school and district Management ( GOB)

PEDPQ1: Quality improvement for PEDP

ESTEEM: Management (financial, planning, M&E, academic supervision) at all levels

CPEP: Upazila Resource Centers (URCs), in-service teacher training, teacher learning aids, School Management Committees, link to cluster training and PTI training;

SPESP: School-cluster-based teacher training; improve curriculum, management training and information systems at central, district, upazila, and school levels;

**Table No. 2**

**Economically active children by region/former district  
2003**

<b>Region</b>	<b>Population (In 000)</b>	<b>No. of Children at Work (In 000)</b>	<b>Work ratio or participation rate (%)</b>
Dinajpur	1762	281	16.0
Rangpur	2972	602	20.3
Pabna	1458	267	18.3
Rajshahi	2443	440	18.0
Bogra	1150	203	17.6
Khulna	1766	298	16.9
Jessore	2172	376	17.3
Kushtia	1359	236	17.3
Barisal	2653	388	14.6
Patuakhali	956	159	16.6
Faridpur	3075	483	15.7
Dhaka	4034	730	18.1
Tangail	962	180	18.8
Mymensing	1332	300	22.6
Jamalpur	1009	217	21.5
Kishorgonj	1329	274	20.6
Comilla	3046	381	12.5
Noakhali	2289	349	15.3
Sylhet	2725	518	19.0
Chittagong	2297	419	18.2
Banderban	528	121	22.8
Rangamati	549	111	20.2
Khagrachari	518	90	17.4
Bangladesh Total	42387	7423	17.5

Source: Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics, 2002-2003 Special Census for Identification of Child Labour

**Table No. 3**  
**Trends in Poverty and inequality**  
**1990-2000**

Indicator	1991-92	2000
<b>Per Population living below poverty line</b>		
All Areas	58.8	58.8
Urban areas	44.9	44.9
Rural areas	61.2	61.2
<b>Poverty Gap</b>		
All Areas	17.2	17.2
Urban areas	12.0	12.0
Rural areas	18.1	18.1
<b>Squared Poverty Gap</b>		
All Areas	6.8	6.8
Urban areas	4.4	4.4
Rural areas	7.2	7.2
<b>Gini Coefficient</b>		
All Areas	0.259	0.259
Urban areas	0.307	0.307
Rural areas	0.243	0.243

Source: Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics, Preliminary Report on Household Income and Expenditure survey, 2000, Dhaka,-2001 and World Bank report-2002.

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6. These and other social results have been cited from Fighting Human Poverty: Bangladesh Human Development Report 2000, Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies (BIDS), a report carried out for the Planning Commission, Dhaka, 2001.
7. Bangladesh Agricultural Census, 1996.
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10. UNESCO, EFA Monitoring Report 2006.
11. The index should measure overall progress towards EFA, six goals. In practice, however, this is difficult, as Goal 3 learning and life-skills programmes is not yet conducive to quantitative measurement. For rather different reasons, ECCE cannot easily be incorporated at present, because the data are insufficiently standardized across countries, and they are, in any case, available for only a small minority of states. Accordingly, an EDI has been designed which incorporates indicators for the four goals of UPE, adult literacy, gender parity and the quality of education. One indicator has been included as a proxy measure for each of these four EDI components. This is in accordance with the principle of considering each goal to be equally important and, thus, of giving the same weight to each of the index constituents. So the EDI value for a particular country is the arithmetical mean of the observed values for each of its different constituents. As each of its constituents is percentages, its value can vary from 0 to 1. The closer it is to its maximum value, the less distance a country is from the goal and the greater its EFA achievement.
12. A School Report of 14 Developing Countries in Asia Pacific, published by Asian South Pacific Bureau of Adult Education and Global Campaign for Education, 2005.
13. The PESP targets 40 per cent students in rural GPS, RNGPS and some madarasas. Identified children are eligible to receive Tk 100 stipend per month (US \$ 1.5). Identification of 40 per cent of pupil enrolled in grades 1-5 from the poorest households is to be conducted at school level by the SMC with the assistance of head teachers and to be reviewed and approved by Upzila education officer. To remain eligible for the monthly stipend , a student has to attain 40 percent marks in term examinations and have 85 per cent monthly class attendance. The stipend, the largest item of development expenditure from government budget is seen as an equity- promoting intervention. A study conducted by the CAMPE in 2003-04, indicated that " the stipend recipient were more or less evenly divided between the four socio-economic categories. Over two-third of the children from the poorest category were not selected to be recipient of the stipend; but 27 per cent of children from affluent households received the stipend. The discussion with the Secretary of Department of Primary and Mass Education indicated that the programme may be substituted by Mid Day Meal Scheme- a discussion with the World Food Programme is currently in advance stage to work out the modalities for Mid-day meal scheme.
14. Bangladesh has a large NGOs sector working for the development of disadvantaged groups.
15. The World Bank supported Primary Education Development Programme.
16. Bangladesh Education Sector Review, USAID-2002.
17. The World Bank, Project document on Reaching Out-of-school Children. 2004

18. This Project will start in 60 Upzila's out of 484 Upzila's. to improve demand side interventions the project will give annual education allowance to the enrolled children to meet their direct and indirect costs. The annual education allowance will range from Tk.800 for class 1-3 and Tk.970 for class 4-5 students. Education allowances will be channeled to qualifying children through bank accounts, managed by their mothers or guardians, and will be disbursed twice a year.
19. Economic Survey, Government of Bangladesh- 2003-04. The Human Development report 2005 indicated 15.5% expenditure on education sector as percent to all other sectors.
20. The conversion rate of Bangladesh Taka was 63.5 to one US\$
21. Average annual public expenditure on primary education per enrolled student was worked out taking into account the number of primary school enrolments (17.46 million in 2003) and budget expenditure of 25,336 million Tk ( both revenue and development expenditure) for primary education in 2004. Exchange rate of Bangladesh Tk was 63.5 per US\$.
22. Bangladesh, Poverty Assessment- Benefit Incident Analysis, Education and Health sectors, World Bank and Asian Development Bank- 2001.
23. Source : BANBIES-2004 estimated data based from Department of Primary Education. However the Secretary, Primary and Mass Education indicated that actual number of primary schools have increased to 82,868 in July 2005.
24. There were around 57,000 GPS and RNGPS schools and the rest of the schools were non-governmental schools mostly due to community initiative. According to the CAMPE survey in 2003-04 the building structure, infrastructure, seating capacity, staff and salary structure varies among these schools significantly.
25. Bangladesh Bureau of Education, Census 2002-2003 for identification of child labourers.
26. Although a number of Non-formal schools are run by BRAC, but the fact is that they only enroll 30 children over a period of 4 years in a NFE schools and a cohort of the children completes non-formal education after 4 years. Thus the number of schools may seem large but the actual magnitude of enrolled children is less.
27. According to 2001 census, Bangladesh had 59,900 Mauza (revenue villages) and nearly 80,000 Grams (villages).
28. The Population threshold was worked out by working ratio of children aged 6-10 years (Census-2001 data) with the number of primary (DPE- 2003) data. The single age data was collected from the Census 2001 records.
29. According to Bangladesh Census 2001, there were 8.44 million children aged 5-9 years who were not attending schools. Since class I education starts from age 6, therefore children aged 5 years (3.97 million) were subtracted from 8.84 million out-of-school children aged 5-9years. Hence out-of-school children aged 6-9 years were 4.47 million.
30. Planning Commission (1998): The Fifth Five Year Plan, 1997-2002, Planning Commission, Government of Bangladesh
31. CAMPE-UPL (1999): Hope not Complacency- State of Primary Education in Bangladesh, 1999, Campaign for Popular Education, and University Press Limited
32. UNICEF (1998): Progotir Pathay, UNICEF, Dhaka
33. The sources of data include CAMPE- Education Watch Household Survey, BANBEIS-2004, EFA-GMR-2005, Primary Education Statistics in Bangladesh 2001, DPE MOPME and Human Development Report 2005, UNDP
34. Government of Bangladesh and United Nations, Millennium Development Goals, Bangladesh Progress Report- 2005
35. CAMPE : Education Watch 2003-04, Quality with Equity: The Primary Education agenda.
36. Ibid.
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38. Rahman, H.Z and Ali, K.S (2005): " Quality Improvement in Quality Education Micro Insights for a

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39. Chowdhury AMR, Nath SR, and others ( 2001): Renewed Hope Daunting Challenge; State of Primary Education In Bangladesh, Dhaka.
40. Op.Cit No.30.
41. Field visit observation by the research team.
42. CAMPE : Education Watch 2000, A Question of quality, state of Primary education in Bangladesh
43. The Gross Drop-out Rate represent percentage of pupils who drop out from a given grade or cycle or level of education in a given school year. The method used to calculate Gross Drop-out Rates is known as the Apparent Cohort Method. There are certain limitations of this method in providing precise estimates, as it does not take into account the data on repeaters.
44. CAMPE, Education Watch -2001, Renewed Hope , Daunting Challenge, State of Primary Education in Bangladesh.
45. Ibid. The food security status was self perceived by the households during the survey.
46. Ibid.
47. The information on children working in informal sectors, or attending schools, who might also be working is difficult to procure. The collection of reliable data regarding child labour is limited also by the fact that, officially the work undertaken by children in domestic and informal sectors are excluded from worker's category, as it is difficult to assess the productive value of such labour. Thus official child labour figures are always at such variance with statistics quoted by non-governmental agencies. Two main recent sources of most authentic data on child labour are a special census conducted by the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics in 2002-03 for identifying child labourer. Another indirect source is Bangladesh Census 2001, which recorded children not attending in schools for different ages. .
48. An agreement was signed in 1995 between the ILO, UNICEF and BGMEA (the body representing the garment exporters), to reduce child labour. This was the first of its kind, and succeeded in greatly reducing child labour in this sector. The ILO today considers it a model which can be used under certain conditions to combat child labour in other countries or in other industries in Bangladesh.
49. According to Bangladesh Census 2001, there were 8.44 million children aged 5-9 years and 5.71 million children aged 10-14 years, who were not attending schools. Since class I education starts from age 6, therefore children aged 5 years (3.97 million) were subtracted from the combined out-of-school children aged 5-14 years. Hence out-of-school children aged 6-14 years were 10.18 million.
50. The Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics special survey 2002-03 returned 6.09 million out-of-school children aged 5-14 years. Since class I education starts from 6 years, hence children aged 5 years were subtracted from the figure of 6.09 million (Unfortunately single age data was not available from the BBS survey 2002-03, however single age data was collected for age 5 from Census 2001. After subtracting children aged 5 years in 2001 from the 6.09 million out of school children recoded by the BBS special survey, the estimated out-of-school children aged 6-14 years were 2.11 million.
51. Project Proposal statement on Reaching Out-of-School children ( ROSC) submitted to the World Bank for Grant, 2004.
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