



Inclusive Futures

Promoting disability inclusion

Labour Market Assessment

Inclusion Works - Bangladesh

Version 01 – August 2019

Acknowledgement

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Abbreviations and Acronyms

AC	Air Conditioner
ASP	Active Server Page
BACCO	Bangladesh Association of Call Centre and Outsourcing
BASIS	Bangladesh Association of Software and Information Services
BBDN	Bangladesh Business and Disability Network
BBS	Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics
BEZA	Bangladesh Economic Zones Authority
BGMEA	Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association
BIDS	Business Intelligence Development Studio
BIFT	BGMEA Institute of Fashion & Technology
BIPPA	Bilateral Investment Promotion and Protection Agreement
BKMEA	Bangladesh Knitwear Manufacturers & Exporters Association
BMET	Bureau for Manpower, Employment and Training
BPAB	BUET Planners Association of Bangladesh
BPO	Business Process Outsourcing
BRAC	Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee
BTEB	Bangladesh Technical Education Board
BUFT	BGMEA University of Fashion & Technology
BUILD	Business Initiative Leading Development
CAD-CAM	Computer-Aided Design/Computer-Aided Manufacturing
CAMPE	Campaign for Popular Education
CBR	Community Based Rehabilitation
CCAP	CRISIL Certified Analyst Programme
CDD	Centre for Disability in Development
CEBAI	Centre of Excellence for Bangladesh Apparel Industry
CNC	Computerized Numerical Control
COEL	Centre of Excellence for Leather Skill Bangladesh Ltd
CPD	Centre for Policy Dialogue
CRP	Centre for the Rehabilitation of the Paralyzed
CRPD	Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD)
CRWA	Child and Woman Rights Advocacy
CSPB	Child Sensitive Social Protection in Bangladesh
CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility
DCCI	Dhaka Chamber of Commerce & Industries
DPO	Disable Person's Organization
DSS	Department of Social Services
DTE	The Directorate of Technical Education
EDM	Electrician of Discharge Machine
FGD	Focused Group Discussion

FY	Fiscal Year
G2C	Government to Citizen
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
HR	Human Resource
HSC	Higher Secondary Certificate
HTML	Hypertext Mark-up Language
IAL	Interstoff Apparels Limited
ICT	Information and communications technology
ILO	International Labour Organization
IMF	International Monetary Fund
ISP	Internet Service Provider
IT	Information Technology
ITES	Information Technology Enabled services
IVET	Initial education and training
KII	Key Informant Interview
MOE	Ministry of Education
MW	Megawatts
NASSCOM	National Association of Software and Services Companies
NCCWE	National Centre for Child Welfare Excellence
NFDDP	National Foundation for Development of the Disabled Persons
NFE	Non-Formal Education Policy
NGO	Non-Governmental Organizations
NSDA	National Skills Development Authority
NSDC	National Skill Development Corporation
NSDP	National Skill Development Policy
NTVQF	National Technical and Vocational Qualifications Framework
OII	Oxford Internet Institute
POS	Point-of-Sale
PR	Public Relations
PSES	Promotion of Social and Environmental Standard
PwD	Person with Disability
RMG	Ready-Made Garments
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SIDA	Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency
SSC	Secondary School Certificate
TDD	Telecommunications Device for the Deaf
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training
UN	United Nations
UNCRPD	UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
UNICEF	United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund
USD	United States Dollar
VAT	Value Added Tax

Executive Summary

Inclusion Works is a 3 years programme aiming at identifying innovative ways to improve economic empowerment and inclusion for Persons with Disabilities. Sightsavers, leading a consortium of 11 organizations, is implementing this programme in four countries – Bangladesh, Nigeria, Kenya and Uganda with the help of funding from UK Aid. Their ultimate objective is to find formal employment opportunities for persons with disabilities by assessing economic conditions and labour markets of these countries. Sightsavers Bangladesh has commissioned Innovision Consulting Pvt Ltd to conduct a rapid labour market assessment in their intervention areas – Dhaka, Gazipur, Tangail, Chattogram and Khulna. The objectives were to analyse current scenario of the labour market, identify job opportunities for persons with disabilities, skills requirement for those jobs, risks and barriers of getting those jobs, etc. This report explains the facts and findings of the assessment and provides recommendations to make Inclusion Works more effective in their interventions.

The assessment consists of two parts – secondary literature review and qualitative study. We have reviewed reports, articles, journals related to the labour market of Bangladesh and collected primary data by conducting Focused Group Discussions and Key Informant Interviews of relevant stakeholders – Government officials, NGOs, DPOs, persons with disabilities, private sector.

The report is divided in eight modules. They are:

- Module 1 – Economic profile of Bangladesh,
- Module 2 – Demand for skills,
- Module 3 – Supply of skills,
- Module 4 – Systems and stakeholders,
- Module 5 – Policies and regulations,
- Module 6 – Alignment between demand and supply of skills,
- Module 7 – Barriers to Disability inclusion and
- Module 8 – Conclusion and Recommendations.

Findings of the above modules are described below:

Module 1 – Economic profile of Bangladesh: Main purpose of this section is to identify the potential sectors which are accelerating the economy of Bangladesh and which sectors are creating large number of employment opportunities. We have identified five growing sectors – Readymade garments, Information and Communication technology, Agro-food processing, Light engineering and Retail trade. RMG sector is playing the dominant role in case of job creation. This sector

employs over 50% of the industrial workforce and accounts for 79% of the total export earnings of the country. Although automation is taking the place in most of the sections of garments factories, but still there is a shortage of 20%-22% of skilled labour. After RMG sector, ICT sector also shows a sign of progress in terms of employment. Bangladesh is annually producing 4,200 ICT graduates. It might be reaching USD 1 billion mark while generating employment for 1,00,000 graduates. According to ICT division, In Bangladesh, there are 6,50,000 registered freelancers and 5,00,000 are working regularly, making \$100 million annually. In recent years, agro-food processing market is growing very fast. As per Bangladesh Agro Processors Association (BAPA), Bangladesh earned \$371 million in FY 2017-18. This sector lacks skilled labour in the areas of packaging, temperature control and other areas. So, this sector has the potential to absorb large number of skilled and semi-skilled workforce in the coming years. Light engineering sector comprises around 80 lac skilled people. The market size is approximately BDT 30,000 crore. According to a study conducted by IFC shows that this sector has in its employment 6,00,000 people involved in 50,000 micro enterprises and 10,000 small and medium enterprises. Bangladesh has experienced Retail revolution over the past 15 years. The sector is one of the biggest contributors to national employment, at 12%, and has made a 14.3% contribution to the national GDP in 2011-2012, together with wholesaling. Apart from these sectors, we have also analysed some other sectors which are growing like Tourism, SME, Ceramics, Telecommunication, etc. In this module we have also discussed about the job opportunities in NGOs, prospect of Government job growth and quota for persons with disabilities in government jobs. NGOs usually create employment in two ways. First, they provide employment in their own organization since they also need human resource to operate. Secondly, they provide loans and management assistance to individuals, which create new employment opportunity. NGOs are providing training to hundreds of men and women on vaccination and treatment of domestic livestock and poultry, construction of sanitary laboratory and slabs; to be mechanics of pump machine or rice/paddy mills etc.

Module 2 – Demand for Skills: After identifying the five potential sectors, we have analysed the skills requirement of those sectors by analysing value chain of each sector. Bangladesh has large number of labour but most of them are not skilled. After conducting KII with private sector, we have realized that every sector has its own requirement of skills like in RMG sector, there is shortage of fashion designers, technicians, dyeing specialists, washing and finishing experts and industrial technologists. This sector demands for skilled Operators, technicians, knitting managers, HR managers, printing managers, etc. In ICT sector, there is a lack of good talent which restricts the growth of IT firms in Bangladesh. This sector lacks skilled programmers, systems analysts, software engineers. Light engineering sector employs unskilled workers. Most of the entrepreneurs are less

educated and only a few of them are formally trained and lack management and innovative skills. This sector requires skilled welder, milling machine operator, industrial electrician, master craftsman, etc. The agro-food manufacturing sub-sector is relatively labour intensive. But the labour must be skilled due to demand for hygiene and food safety. This sector needs skilled people who have knowledge in product quality, standardization, export marketing, etc. Retail sector is facing challenges like lack of skilled worker, lack of strategic direction, etc. This sector needs people who have extensive knowledge and training on IT, awareness on business knowledge, good communication skill, etc.

Module 3 – Supply of skills: In this section, we have tried to explain the current skills available in Bangladesh. Three types of skills – Foundation skill, Transferable skill, Technical and Vocational skills are available in Bangladesh. Foundation skills include functional literacy and numeracy skills generally acquired through primary education. These skills are prerequisites for continuing in further education and training, and for acquiring transferable and job-specific technical and vocational skills. Transferable skills refer to competencies that enable learners to solve problems, communicate ideas and information effectively, learn to work in teams in a collaborative way, and conduct oneself with basic discipline in the workplace. Technical and vocational skills refer to skills and technical know-how related to specific occupations and jobs. Both public and private sectors are providing training courses. According to Bangladesh Labour Force Survey 2016-17, an estimated 1.9 million persons (about 1.7 per cent of the total working age population) have participated in a formal training course outside the general school system. But still there are limited linkages between employers and most institutions that provide TVET. Products from the vocational system are not meeting their needs. So, skill mismatch still exists. To solve skill mismatch problems, one of the most crucial solutions could be to align the existing curriculum with current market demand and future market trend.

Module 4 - Systems and stakeholders: We have portrayed two factors in this section. One is the map of education to work transition process where we have described how students come to formal work from education and the role of students and employers in different time period. Then we have described the disability assessment process. According to Ministry of Social Welfare, Parents/Caregivers should check and identify disability of their children within 2 years of their birth. We have also identified the reasons of lower representation of persons with disabilities in formal employment by conducting KII and FGD with DPOs, Private sector and NGOs. We have listed the reasons by using a Fish Bone analysis diagram. Main reasons include social stigma, lack of reasonable recommendation, lack of basic education, lack of sector specific training, etc.

Module 5 - Policies and regulations: In this section, we have discussed

International and national policy level framework regarding disability rights and labour law. In International context, Disability is referenced in various parts of the SDGs and specifically in parts related to education, growth and employment, inequality, accessibility of human settlements. In national context, the Government of Bangladesh adopted 'The United Nations Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities' in 1993. Government has made adequate provision in the National Policies for people with disabilities to create employment opportunities. Further Government has made quota of jobs for the people with disabilities in category 3 & 4 of the Government services. Recently Government has developed inclusive vocational education and training for the disabled. Ministry of Social welfare has conducted door to door census to identify disable people and started providing an allowance of BDT 700 per month to disable people. After discussing with relevant stakeholders, we found that under Social Safety Net program, persons with disabilities now have their own identity card.

Module 6 – Alignment between demand and supply of skills: In Module 3, we have mentioned about the skills mismatch. Employers don't get skilled labour. In this section, we have described the role of Government and Private institutes to make an alignment between demand and supply of skills. Government is trying to restructure overall education system of Bangladesh. Cash incentives are given to the technical education students along with other instrumental support. Bangladesh Technical Education Board (BTEB) is taking initiative to modify their curriculum to align with future market demand. Bangladesh Garments Manufacturers Export Association (BGMEA), in association with UNICEF and ILO, has established a Garment Workers' Education Program to provide basic education and vocational education (to those who qualify) to former child laborers in the garment industry.

Module 7 – Barriers in Disability inclusion: This section describes the constraints that persons with disabilities face in every stage of their lives. We have described the barriers in three categories – Barriers in government systems, Barriers from Employer's perspective, Barriers from DPOs perspective. In public sector, there is a 10% quota for orphan and persons with disabilities at Blue Collar Government Jobs (third- and fourth-class employees). But these policies are not being implemented appropriately due to lack of awareness and proper support system for disable people. In Bangladesh, there is no comprehensive database for persons with disabilities. As there is no database, disable people are hard to reach and they also don't know about the policies, trainings and facilities of the government that has been taken for them. This year in the National Budget, the Government has declared a Tax rebate of 5% on total tax introduced for taxpayers who employs physically challenged persons for at least 10% of the workforce. But there are doubts in the mind of the NGOs and DPOs working with PwDs, that this

will be difficult to materialize and give proper benefit to PwDs. NGOs are providing traditional training to persons with disabilities like adapting to workplace environment, but this is not enough as employers need skilled labour. So many organizations are trying to provide training and education to the PwDs, but the biggest challenge is, those schools and training institutes are not accessible for disable people. Mindset is the main barrier that PwDs face while going for a job. They assume that jobs are for physically fit people only.

Module 8 – Conclusions and Recommendations: Based on the findings, we have provided some recommendations for Inclusion Works. First, we need to create awareness among the family and the community members; so that the PwDs can have access to education and other socialization process to build themselves as capable workforce in line with contemporary needs. General education and technical education curriculum and teaching methods should be inclusive. The formal sector is flourishing in our country mainly through private initiative and having supports from government institutions. So, there should be synchronized efforts from public-private partnership for better addressing the issues of job placements for PwDs. The DPOs should be given more capacities and priorities to disseminate information to the PwDs and their families about their entitlements and the scope of education, training and job placements. NGOs, donors and DPOs needs to come to a common platform and make the things happen in a holistic manner to improve the lives of the PwDs.

Specific Recommendation for Inclusion Works:

1. Comprehensive Database on PwDs for linking with Employers
2. Lobbying with the Government
3. Policies should be rights based, not charity based
4. Clarify the process for 5% tax rebate for hiring PwDs in Private organizations
5. Formalize SME sub sectors
6. Working with Business Communities
7. Sensitization programs for family members of persons with disabilities
8. Making economic zones disability inclusive
9. Enhancing the Role of DPOs

It is found from the rapid assessment that, though the process of inclusion in formal private sector has started but yet to develop a culture of inclusion where the disabled would be able to gather proper knowledge and skills and will be able to enter into formal market through competitive process. Awareness and technical knowledge at both ends can accelerate the process and Inclusion Works can play a vital role in creating an enabling working environment for the Persons with Disability (PwDs).

1. Introduction

Bangladesh has a large population with 34 percent aged 15 and younger and just 5 percent aged 65 and older. At present, more than 65 percent of our population is of working age, between 15 and 64.¹ When there is such a large percentage of population in any nation, they are expected to contribute to the country's economy, this opportunity is known as the “demographic dividend” which refers to “the economic growth potential that can result from shifts in a population's age structure, mainly when the share of the working-age population is larger than the non-working-age share of the population,” as defined by the United Nations Population Fund. Such upward trend towards high potential growth in the labour market also encouraged the disable people of our society to engage themselves into different economic activity and contribute to the economic wellbeing of the country.

However, it is a matter of regret that, up until today, the Persons with Disability (PwD) are discriminated against their inclusion to regular civic rights like joining the workforce, joining popular mainstream activities or even social services. They are denied their social rights most often than not. Generally, most of the Persons with Disability (PwD) coming from the poor economic background of the society struggle a lot to make their place in society to enjoy the basic human rights to economic and social empowerment.

In these circumstances, Sightsavers, a leading association of 11 organizations extended their hand to drive the initiative of inclusion and economic empowerment of Persons with Disability (PwD) to the mainstream labour market of this country. At this point the programme is to be run in counties like Bangladesh, Kenya, Nigeria and Uganda. Even though it is a planned initiative for 3 years and some background work has already been done before the project started, Innovision Consulting has been assigned to conduct a rapid labour market assessment to develop a broad picture of the present scenario of the employment of Persons with Disability (PwD) by considering - public policy perspective, public- private coordination prospective, capacity development prospective of Persons with Disability (PwD) and finally willingness of the industry employer to employ disable people into workforce.

1.1 Bangladesh scenario

Persons with disability are often subjected to discrimination and negative attitudes in Bangladesh, where they live in an unfriendly and hostile environment. They

¹ <https://www.thedailystar.net/lifestyle/perspective/news/demographic-dividend-could-turn-demographic-disaster-1709272>

encounter non-cooperation, ill treatment, neglect and hostility at the family, community, society and government levels. A study that examined the impact of disability on the quality of life of Persons with Disability (PwD) in rural Bangladesh reported that more than half of people with disabilities were looked at negatively by society. Disabled women and girl children experienced more negative attitudes than their male counterparts. Discrimination, exclusion and neglect of persons with disability and their household are still prevalent, as the laws (including the Disabled Persons Protection and Rights Act 2013) are not being sufficiently enforced².

Although most of the people with disability have some forms of special skills or knowledge, the available employment opportunities for them are limited. In 2002, of the persons with disabilities who are employed, only 5% are employed in government agencies, 17% in non-government organizations, and the rest are in self-employed activities. In addition, in most cases, employees with disabilities do not get equal rights and privileges as their colleagues without any disability. Physical accessibility to the workplaces and the indoor facilities are important for effective inclusion of persons with disabilities into employment and ensuring equal rights.

So far very little has been achieved in Bangladesh with regards to employment, vocational training and income generating activities for persons with disabilities. To be effective, the salary and conditions must match those of all other employees. The main barriers to employment seem to be prejudice and ignorance. In addition, people with disabilities are not given the opportunity to qualify for employment through formal education at higher levels. There is a public sector employment quota of 10% for persons with disabilities, but actual employment rates are low. By 2002 the government ran two vocational rehabilitation centres. There are plans for further centres of this nature. It is not clear how effective vocational training is to get people into work. In 2002 there were 93 recorded credit and employment schemes for persons with disability in Bangladesh. Few private companies were found to employ people with disabilities. For the instances where people with disabilities were employed in the private sector, there were rarely explicit employment policies behind the initiative. Many work-related accidents in the private sector result in disabilities which could have been prevented. There are extensive guidelines on occupational health and safety, but control and enforcement are limited. There is potential for the private sector to do more to improve the employment of persons with disabilities. With regards to the not for profit sector, several non-government organizations include people with disabilities in micro-credit and non-formal income generating schemes. Several centres exist to assist persons with disability access non-formal income

² <http://dspace.bracu.ac.bd/xmlui/bitstream/handle/10361/4012/12263004.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y>

generation³.

1.2 Objectives and research question

As laid out in the terms of reference of the programme, Sightsavers Bangladesh in collaboration with Innovision Consulting along with the assistance from ADD International, Bangladesh conducted this rapid country-level labour market assessment. Apart from that, in case of finalizing the assessments, it is expected to develop programme strategy and implementation under the guidance of Sightsavers technical leads. From the point view of achieving the core objectives of this assessment, this initiative would like to answer the questions listed below:

- Which sectors of the Bangladeshi economy is growing the economy rapidly with potential to generate mass employment?
- Considering the answer of the first question, the assessment would like to seek the demand of the hard and soft skills needed by job seekers to compete for employment in these employment generating industries?
- Policy & practice wise, what barriers are there those hinders the opportunity of a disable man and women to get meaningful employment into the formal sectors?
- What sort to skill development programme(s) we require to develop the capacity of different type of Persons with Disability (PwD) to onboard them in the pool of formal labour market?

2. Methodology

Based on the narrated objective and the research question, we collected primary data for the study in a qualitative approach. Along with that, as the terms of reference of the assignment refers- a secondary literature review was also conducted as a part of the study along with conducting the primary data collection from the field.

The secondary literature reviews mainly included the review of the policy documents from national level as well as review of national and international publications that are relevant for the assessment.

With the support from Sightsavers Bangladesh, we initiated the collection of primary data from relevant key stakeholders. Under the framework of qualitative approach, we conducted Focused Group Discussion (FGD) and Key Informant Interview (KII) from the selected key stakeholders. We have used a methodology title World Café for one of the sessions with PwDs in Saver at Access Bangladesh

³ <http://dspace.bracu.ac.bd/xmlui/bitstream/handle/10361/4012/12263004.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y>

Foundation’s office. We also conducted an FGD with PwDs in Gazipur. For collecting data from Chittagong and Khulna, we received support from concerned personnel from ADD International, Bangladesh.

Below is a chart of persons we have been able to reach and the method that we used to collect information from them.

Figure 1: Organization wise Key Informant Interviews

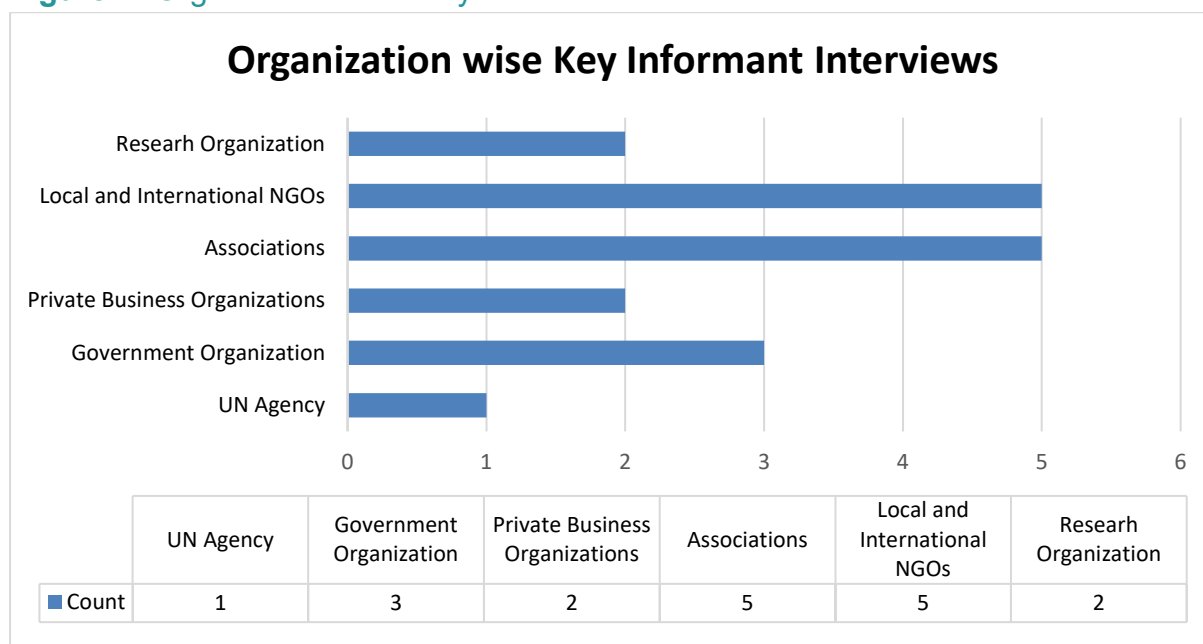
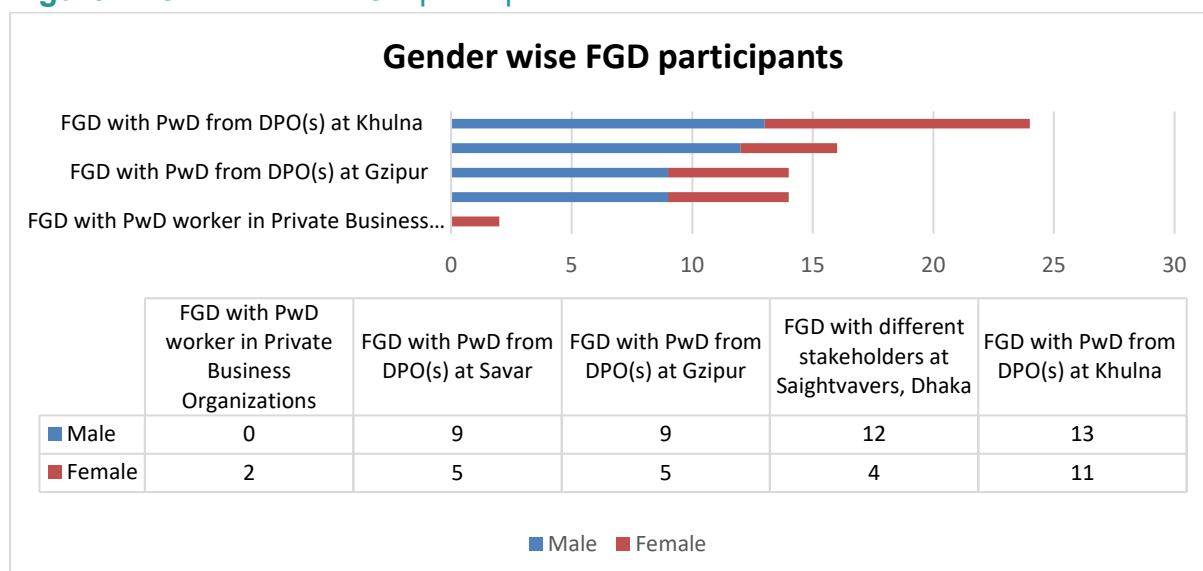


Figure 2: Gender wise FGD participants



3. Key concepts

Disability – Disability is a normal part of human diversity. Disability may be permanent, temporary or fluctuating, and may have a minimal or substantial impact on a person's life. Disability may impact mobility, learning or communication and can result from accident, illness or genetic conditions.⁴

According to UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (Article 1, paragraph 2), Persons with disabilities include those who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments which in interaction with various barriers may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others.

According to the World Health Organization, disability has three dimensions:

Impairment in a person's body structure or function, or mental functioning; examples of impairments include loss of a limb, loss of vision or memory loss.

Activity limitation, such as difficulty seeing, hearing, walking, or problem solving.

Participation restrictions in normal daily activities, such as working, engaging in social and recreational activities, and obtaining health care and preventive services.

There are various types of Disability. As per The Rights and Protection of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2013, enacted by the Government of Bangladesh, there are eleven types of disabilities. They are:

- Autism or autism spectrum disorder
- Mental illness leading to disability
- Visual Disability
- Hearing Disability
- Deaf blindness
- Cerebral Palsy
- Physical Disability
- Speech Disability
- Intellectual Disability
- Down Syndrome
- Multiple Disability

Disability Assessment - Disability assessment is an authoritative determination about the kind and extent of disability a person has, as part of a larger

⁴ <https://sae.edu.au/student-services/introduction-to-disability/what-is-disability/>

administrative process usually called disability evaluation or disability determination. Disability assessment is part of a process that determines the eligibility of a claimant for some social benefit, service or protection that comprises a country's disability policy.⁵

Worldwide, strategies of disability assessment focus either on (i) health conditions and the impairments associated with them; (ii) functional limitations in basic or simple activities, understood independently of environmental or contextual differences; or (iii) disability fully understood as an outcome of interactions between features intrinsic to the person (health conditions, impairments and functional limitations) and the full range of environmental factors that, possibly uniquely, characterize the overall lived-context of the individual.

Hard Skills - Hard skills include the specific knowledge and abilities required in any complex task. These types of skills are learned and can be defined, evaluated and measured. These skills can be acquired through formal education and training programs. Examples include expertise in Computer operating, Automotive, Nursing, Carpentry, Manufacturing, Mechanical work, Plumbing, Data analysis, etc.

Soft Skills – Soft skills are attributes and personality traits that affect interpersonal interactions and while different, are also as important as hard skills in the workforce. These include characteristics such as leadership, empathy, communication, etiquette and more skills that aren't as quantifiable as hard skills.

Inclusive Employment - Inclusive employment refers to individuals with disabilities working alongside their peers without disabilities in the competitive labour market (with access to the same benefits and career opportunities). Inclusive employment ensures that no person is segregated or excluded from quality employment opportunities because of their disability. Inclusive employment ensures that individuals with disabilities have access to the same work, accommodations, and benefits as their non-disabled peers, with the tools they need to be succeed.

Job analysis - Job Analysis is one of the tools used in job evaluation. Job analysis is done first and can then be used to assist in the ranking of jobs and assessing their relative worth. With Disabilities in Job Coaching it involves training people with disabilities to perform specific job tasks in an open employment situation.

Reasonable Accommodation – Reasonable accommodation is any change to a job, the work environment, or the way things are usually done that allows an individual with a disability to apply for a job, perform job functions, or enjoy equal

⁵ <http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/272851468164970738/pdf/Disability-Assessment-Report-June-18-2015.pdf>

access to benefits available to other individuals in the workplace. For example, an employer might lower the height of a desktop to accommodate a worker in a wheelchair; provide TDD telephone equipment for a worker whose hearing is impaired; or provide a quiet, distraction-free workspace for a worker with attention deficit disorder.

Formal Employment – Formal work refers to work in which a company hires an employee under an established working agreement that includes, salary or wages, health benefits, and defined work hours and workdays. In most instances, employees don't work under a signed contract, but rather work under the agreement reached when the employer offered the job to the employee. This agreement remains in force until the employer makes a change and informs an employee about those changes. Employees in a formal work agreement are often given an annual performance evaluation and are eligible for salary increases and promotions based on their performance.

Formal work is far more stable than informal work. The reason for this is that companies invest time, training, and education in formal work employees, so that they can gain new skills that will benefit the business. Formal work typically pays higher wages than informal work. The reason is that formal work tends to require a higher level of education or training than informal work. Formal workers are taxed under the existing tax guidelines and receive pay checks that reflect these taxes.

4. Module 1: Economic Profile of Bangladesh

This section will portray the current economic condition of Bangladesh by describing contribution of dominant sectors (Industry, Service, Agriculture) in GDP and recent economic trends. After that, this section will discuss about the emerging sectors and subsectors of Bangladesh which help in growing the economy and creating large number of job opportunities for people.

Bangladesh has made remarkable progress toward ending poverty and sharing prosperity with more of its people. As recently as 2000, about one in three Bangladeshis lived in extreme poverty based on the national poverty line; today, this has fallen to 13 percent. The poorest 40 percent of the population also saw positive per person consumption growth. Like in most countries, a key reason was broad-based growth in earnings. With more than 20 million people still living in extreme poverty and many workers with insecure jobs, Bangladesh cannot be complacent. It needs faster economic growth that can deliver more and better jobs for everyone.⁶

⁶ <https://blogs.worldbank.org/endpovertyinsouthasia/what-can-bangladesh-do-deliver-more-and-better-jobs-everyone>

The economy has been good for jobs over the past decade. Between 2003 and 2015, jobs growth outpaced the growth of the working age population. This not only cut unemployment rates but also brought millions of new workers into the labour market. With urbanization, workers have shifted from agriculture to industry and services. A large share of this new job growth came in formal waged employment, accompanied by strong productivity and wage growth. Large-scale expansion of employment in manufacturing, driven by the Ready Made Garment (RMG) sector, has contributed to this transformation, changing the lives of many for the better.⁷

According to Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics, GDP growth reached to 7.86% in FY 2017-18. Agriculture, Service, Manufacturing, Construction, Transport are some of the dominant sectors which play important role in GDP growth. Sector wise GDP contribution is given below:

Table 1: Sector wise GDP Contribution (in Crore taka)

Sector/Sub sector	2017-18	Percentage (%)
Agriculture & Forestry		
• Crops & horticulture	159,171	7.24%
• Animal farming	39,625	1.80%
• Forest & related services	28,557	1.30%
Industry		
• Large & medium scale (Manufacturing)	332,594	15.12%
• Small scale (Manufacturing)	71,551	3.25%
• Electricity, Gas and Water Supply	29,336	1.33%
Service		
• Hotel and Restaurants	22,123	1.01%
• Transport, Storage & Communication	204,630	9.30%
• Wholesale and Retail Trade	279,823	12.72%
• Education	64,478	2.93%
• Real Estate, Renting and Business Activities	166,419	7.57%
• Construction	169,855	7.72%
Total	2,199,659	100.00%

Source: Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics Economic Review8

⁷ <https://blogs.worldbank.org/endpovertyinsouthasia/what-can-bangladesh-do-deliver-more-and-better-jobs-everyone>

⁸ Source: https://mof.gov.bd/site/page/44e399b3-d378-41aa-86ff-8c4277eb0990/BangladeshEconomicReview?fbclid=IwAR1mR3vfspI8uGI9eg8cDX_jBsmTnzfd0EYrdC5zQMfvExFhxgOgz3AE8w

BBS has also conducted Labour Force Survey for FY 2016-17. According to the latest survey in FY2016-17, the number of economically active population above 15 years is 6.35 crore. Out of this, male 4.35 crore and female 2.00 crore. List of employers above 15 years of age involved in different sectors is given below:

Table 2: population aged 15 or above, by major industry and sex

Sector	Bangladesh		Total (%)
	Male (%)	Female (%)	
Agriculture, forestry and fishing	32.2	59.7	40.6
Manufacturing	14	15.4	14.4
Construction	7.5	1.4	5.6
Wholesale and retail trade	19	3.4	14.2
Transportation	11.9	1.1	8.6
ICT	0.4	0.1	0.3
Financial and Insurance activities	0.8	0.4	0.7
Education	3.1	4.8	3.6
Public administration	2.0	0.8	1.6

Source: **Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics Economic Review**

From the above table, it is clear that:

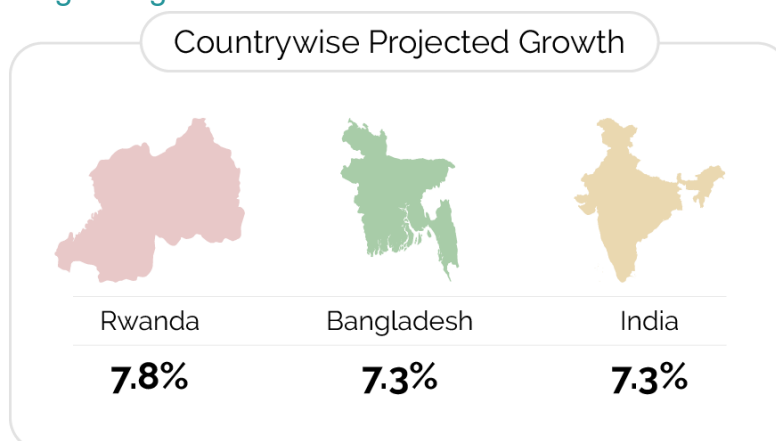
- Agriculture sector creates the largest number of jobs. 40.6% people are employed in this sector
- Manufacturing and Retail trade hold the second and third position.

Economic trends of Bangladesh

Bangladesh has become one of Asia's most remarkable and unexpected success stories in recent years. According to International Monetary Fund, Bangladesh is among the three fastest growing economies in the world. This year, the economy is projected to grow at 7.3% according to IMF.

Finance Minister AHM Mustafa Kamal, in his budget speech, has projected the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth rate at 8.2 per cent in the proposed national budget for 2019-20 fiscal.

Figure 3: Fastest growing countries



Source: IMF⁹

Sound macroeconomic policies – such as keeping the budget deficit below 5 percent of GDP – and resilient domestic demand have led to growth in manufacturing and construction industries on the supply side. On the demand side, growth is led by private consumption and exports. After a modest performance last year, export earnings and remittances have bounced back helping the rural economy grow faster. In addition, the country has substantially improved its electricity generation and a bumper agricultural harvest has further stimulated growth. The share of machinery in total imports for leading industries such as textiles, garments, pharmaceuticals, packing and leather has also declined, reaching 31.8 percent in July-November 2018 from 55.6 percent in 2009. For Bangladesh to be an attractive destination for industries, it is critical to make resources such as land, electricity and gas available. According to a recent report of HSBC Global Research¹⁰, Bangladesh will be a \$700 billion economy in 2030 from \$300 billion now. The report focuses on six main categories of economic indicators: catch-up potential, population (size and shape), human capital (education and healthcare), politics, openness and technology.

In order to become an upper middle-income country by 2031 and achieve high income country status by 2041, Bangladesh will require huge investments in physical capital, human capital, and innovation enabled by reforms in areas such as financial sector, business regulation, and addressing the infrastructure gap.

Major job creating sectors;

- The Industrial sector, which was a major employment generator between 2000 and 2010, employed only 3 lakh people in the last seven years till FY

⁹ <https://www.thedailystar.net/business/news/bangladesh-second-fastest-growing-economy-imf-1728289>

¹⁰ <https://www.thedailystar.net/business/news/bangladesh-be-26th-largest-economy-1642432>

2016-17. On average, the sector created 42,857 jobs a year during the period. In the previous seven years till 2010, it created 8.71 new jobs, according to the Labour Force Survey released by the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics. As a result of this reversal, industrial sector's share of employment fell to 20.4 percent in 2016-17, down from the highest 23 percent recorded in 2013.

- On the other hand, service sector created the highest number of jobs. Service sector employed 2.37 crore people as it added 17 lakh jobs from 2015-16. As a result, the share of service sector rose 2.1 percentage points to 39 percent in 2016-17, as the sector secured the share lost by agriculture and industrial sectors during the period.
- Although agriculture's share in the employment pie has shrunk, it still accounts for the highest number of jobs -- 40.6 percent of the total employed population recorded in 2016-17.

Despite robust economic growth, the pace of job creation has slowed in recent years, as confirmed by the 2015 Labour Force Survey recently released by the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics. The slowdown was particularly sharp in the RMG sector. These developments put at risk many of the labour market gains made over the last decade, placing pressure on women and young workers. Unemployment rates among youth, particularly females, have already seen an increase in recent years.

There is still much that is wrong with Bangladesh's labour market. The biggest challenge is job quality, which remains poor with substantial numbers of workers employed in informal, unpaid, or agricultural work. Only 1 in 5 workers are in wage work, less than 40 percent of whom have a written contract. This puts most workers in jobs they could lose at short notice. There is a big gap in the quality of jobs between men and women: compared to only 5 percent of working men, one in three working women are not paid for their work.¹¹

So, from the above discussion, it can be concluded that, following determinants help to make sectors as potential growth sectors:

1. Contribution in GDP
2. Employment generation opportunities

Based on the above determinants, at present five sectors aid in accelerating the economy of Bangladesh. They are:

- Readymade Garments Industry

¹¹ <https://blogs.worldbank.org/endpovertyinsouthasia/what-can-bangladesh-do-deliver-more-and-better-jobs-everyone>




- Information and Communication Technology
- Agro-food processing
- Light engineering
- Retail Trade

Recent economic trends, employment opportunities of these sectors are described below.

4.1 Sector 1: Readymade Garments Industry

Readymade Garments sector has been the biggest employment generator in Bangladesh. Bangladesh is clearly ahead of other Southeast Asian suppliers in terms of capacity of the ready-made-garment industry. The phenomenal growth in the Ready Made Garment (RMG) sector in the last decade created many new factories and employment opportunities. Recent growth of this sector is described below:

Figure 4: Recent growth in RMG sector

	 Number of Garment Factories	 Employment in Million Workers	 Export of RMG in Million USD
2014 - 15	4,296	4.000	25,491.40
2015 - 16	4,328	4.000	28,094.17
2016 - 17	4,482	4.000	28,149.84

Source: BGMEA, Export Promotion Bureau, Bangladesh Bank

Sector highlights:

- Cost and quality of products that are produced on time, reliably and very competitively with a highly skilled labour force.
- A unique regional location for expansion into key Eastern and other markets.
- Favoured trading status with the EU and the USA.
- Clusters of companies providing a local supplier base with real depth in skilled labour, training and technical development facilities.

Key findings from BGMEA and GIZ:

After conducting Interviews with BGMEA and GIZ, we have identified that RMG sector is still the most potential sector in Bangladesh for job creation. From the discussions we understood that RMG sector plays a leading role in labour employment of Bangladesh. This sector now employs over 50% of the industrial workforce and accounts for 79% of the total export earnings of the country. The growing trend in the textile and the garments sector means that Bangladesh is perfectly positioned to appeal to foreign investors. All these findings and studies suggest that RMG Industry is still a potential sector for employment generation.

Ready Made Garment exports from Bangladesh were sluggish in the early months of 2018 but steadily picked up. The latest figures from the Export Promotion Bureau show that for the last fiscal year, the apparel sector contributed USD 30.61 billion, or 83.49 percent, to Bangladesh's total exports of USD 36.66 billion. And during July-November of the fiscal year 2018-19, the growth stood at 20 percent.

The year 2018 has seen some positive steps taken by the RMG industry. Earlier in 2018, there was an announcement of a new minimum wage of Tk 8,000 (USD 97) per month for the garment workers.¹² This is a notable step forward for the RMG industry and, although some international NGOs and unions were calling for a larger increase, it has to be borne in mind that this was an over 50 percent increase on the previous minimum wage, which was set five years ago.¹³

Considering the sector's importance to the country's economic stability, ensuring steady growth for RMG export in the short to medium term, is a key policy imperative. In the recent past, the sector's growth has been marginal, with exports growing by 0.2% and 8.7% for 2016-17 and 2017-18 respectively. Future growth would be contingent on the outcomes of multitude of internal and external factors, which could potentially determine the sector's competitiveness and performance

Although Automation is taking place but still there is a shortage of about 20- 22% of skilled workers.

**- Iqbal Hamid Quraishi
(Adnan), Director, BGMEA**

Day by day more and more factories in this industry are becoming compliant and this sector is competing globally that is why the earning prospect is good, considering all these- we think RMG is the most promising sector.

**S.M. Ali Hasnain Fatme,
Manager Corporate Affairs,
Centre for Disability and
Development**

¹² <https://www.dhakatribune.com/business/regulations/2018/09/13/tk8-000-set-as-minimum-wage-for-rmg-workers>

¹³ <https://www.thedailystar.net/opinion/perspective/news/bangladesh-rmg-gains-and-pains-2018-1680832>

vis-à-vis its closest competitors.¹⁴

4.2 Sector 2: Information and Communication Technology

About 800 registered software and ITES companies exist in Bangladesh (BASIS). The total industry's size is around BDT 1,800 crore with 30,000 professionals employed. Though its contribution in comparison to traditional industries is not very significant but it is creating high quality employment, employing mostly graduates. Several emerging Asian countries opted for digitization to pursue opportunities in IT sectors. For example, Malaysia created 800 new IT companies and over 98,000 new jobs over the years through constant growth. Moreover, about 200 foreign companies have set up regional centres in Malaysia. Similarly, in India IT industry has led to huge foreign investment and led to an estimated amount of USD 140 billion market of outsourcing sector compared to USD 700 million for Bangladesh. From the experience of these countries, Bangladesh can similarly implement IT promotion strategy tailored to the country's resources.

Bangladesh is annually producing approximately 4,200 ICT graduates. If proper support is given to the sector, it might be reaching the USD 1 billion mark while generating employment for 100,000 graduates. Call centres are account for an important segment of ICT sub-sectors, as it employs about 25,000 people. According to an Asian foundation report, if public call centres are established, it will generate more than 40,000 jobs over four years and the private sector is expected to generate about 60,000 more jobs. E-commerce sector is also important as it is employing about 8,000 people directly in various services e.g. payment processing, order processing, logistics, etc.

According to Oxford Internet Institute (OII) of Oxford University in the UK, Bangladesh now contributes 16.8% of all outsourced online workers in the world, a rate which is second only to India on 24.6%. Of the Bangladeshi outsourcing workers, 22% work in software development and technology, representing 3.7% of all online freelancers in the world. The majority (about 40%, or 6.8% of the world total) work in sales and marketing support. About a quarter work in creative multimedia (4.2% in the global context). Similarly, about 3% work in writing and translation, 7% in clerical and data entry and 2% in professional services (representing 0.5%, 1.3% and 0.4% of all freelancers on the web).

Under the Professional Outsourcing Training programme, the government has planned to train 13,000 unemployed people in three key ICT areas: graphic design, web design and development, and digital marketing. Already, a total of 11,920 people have completed the training and of them, 5,680 people have earned Tk3.44 crores. Aside from being self-employed, many of these successful

¹⁴ <https://www.lightcastlebd.com/insights/2018/10/04/rmg-and-textile-sector-emerging-trends-and-challenges-for-2018>

freelancers now provide jobs for others.

BACCO represents the Business Process Outsourcing (BPO) and Call Centre industry in Bangladesh. They advocate and work with all stakeholders in Bangladesh to create the right ecosystem; to grow this industry by 100,000+ of middle income sustainable jobs for youths by 2021, which will contribute to the achievement of Honourable Prime Minister, Sheik Hasina's vision of Digital Bangladesh 2021.

BACCO's 2nd Five Year Plan (2016 - 2021), guides all our initiatives and activities designed to promote the long-term success for the industry. BACCO says appropriate Policy, Rules and Regulations are in place for both local and international businesses. They want to ensure appropriate education and training are available to create the workforce to support the growth of the industry. The industry is enjoying over 40% year on year growth of its workforce and greater diversification of its work portfolio. In the next 5 years BACCO hopes to unlock outsourcing of 20,000+ person Government to Citizen (G2C) Services and 10,000+ person Banking and Insurance Services.

BACCO actively encourage its members to recruit women and physically disable people. They encourage entrepreneurs and generally anyone who are interested in creating meaningful sustainable jobs for the youth to start them on their future career path. They believe with a country whose population is getting younger every year, it is the right ingredient for success of Bangladesh.

Figure 5: Road map of BPO industry of Bangladesh



According to the ICT Division, there are 650,000 registered freelancers and about 500,000 are working regularly, making \$100 million annually. One of the biggest advantages of freelancing is that one can work from home.¹⁵

There are logistical challenges, however: the high price of bandwidth and a lack of quality internet service is a problem for freelancers in rural areas. Although there are broadband connections in some areas, it is too slow to suit their work. Long term and high-level training are another obstacle to getting highly paid work.

The state minister for ICT Division, Zunaid Ahmed Palak, told the Dhaka Tribune that the government has taken steps to establish the Sheikh Kamal IT Training and Incubation Centre to provide higher training for freelancers and make the sector sustainable. The minister said the centre provides SSC and HSC graduates with six-month trainings and later follow ups with training to upgrade their knowledge of freelancing.

“Since 70% of our population is young, the government’s vision is to make them tech savvy and engage them in IT-based work through freelancing,”

State Minister for ICT Division, Zunaid Ahmed Palak.

“Under the direction of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, we are working to get fibre optic connections to the union level by 2018 to ensure affordable high-speed internet. The goal is to translate the vision of Digital Bangladesh into reality by 2021,” the State Minister said. With employment costs rising in countries like India, China and the Philippines, there are vast opportunities for Bangladesh in the outsourcing industry as global employers are out looking for alternatives.

Digital Bangladesh’ means digitalizing Bangladesh by ensuring an ICT based society where information will be available in online and where all possible activities of the government and other non-government or semi-government organizations will be performed using digital technology. The motto of Digital Bangladesh is to establish technology and knowledge based digital governance such as e-services, e-commerce, e-health, e-education etc.

Digital Bangladesh is one of the nation's dreams, and so special emphasis is given on the application of digital technologies to realise Vision 2021, which we commonly call Digital Bangladesh. By 2021, after 50 years of independence, our goal is to be a middle-income country with peace, prosperity and dignity. The government of Bangladesh implemented many projects relating to digital technologies and a number of these are already underway. National ICT Policy-2009 was developed with a view to achieve middle-income status of the nation

¹⁵<https://www.dhakatribune.com/career/2017/09/20/freelancers-turn-bangladesh-hub-ict-outsourcing>

by 2021 and developed status by 2041.

Source:

- <https://www.thedailystar.net/supplements/24th-anniversary-the-daily-star-part-1/digital-bangladesh-dreams-and-reality-73118>
- <https://www.coursehero.com/file/p1bp8q6n/Definition-of-Digital-Bangladesh-Digital-Bangladesh-means-digitalizing/>

4.3 Sector 3: Agro-food processing

The food processing industry in Bangladesh represents one of the major potential sectors within the industrial segments in terms of contribution to value addition and employment. The sector accounts for over 22% of all manufacturing production and employs about 20% of labour forces. All food processing enterprises account for 2% of the national GDP.

The market of agro-processing products is increasing very fast both in domestic and export markets. Bringing a solution to post harvest losses, agro-processing industry has opened a new avenue for the Bangladesh in the field of export earnings, which already witnessed a 41% rise to \$374 million in the last fiscal year. According to Export Promotion Bureau (EPB) data compiled by Bangladesh Agro-Processors' Association (BAPA), in the fiscal year 2017-18 Bangladesh earned \$371 million, up by 40.72%, which was \$263.63 million the previous year.¹⁶

According to the president of the Bangladesh Agro-Processors' Association (BAPA), 14% of the agro-processed food is exported to India. Moreover, he also opined that the local market of agro-processing food is rapidly expanding. As an example, he mentioned that chips worth BDT 30 crore were being sold by companies annually locally. As per BAPA data, the agro-processed products include' pickle, chutney , mango bar, jam jelly, juice, spices, aromatic rice, fine rice, tea, chanachur, peanuts, mustard oil, biscuits, zira cut supari, drinks, seeds, candy, puffed rice, flattened rice, flour, hair oil, isubgul, ghee, noodles, vermicelli, kashundi, frozen vegetables, snacks, rose water, dried dal/peas, potato crackers, honey, molasses, jadah(tobacco), diabetic firni mix, meat, sweets, milk powder, lassi, sesame seeds, black berry, potato flakes, sesame oil, sugar cane, puff corn, sesame bar and canned pineapple.

There is growing demand for a skilled and semi-skilled workforce in the agro-

¹⁶ <https://www.dhakatribune.com/business/2019/02/24/agro-processing-industry-bangladesh-s-next-export-frontier>

processing sector in Bangladesh. As the sector is expanding, there is a shortage of workers in the areas of packaging, temperature control and other technical works. This indicates that the sector has the potential to absorb many skilled and semiskilled workers in coming years. It is also important to note that this sector has the potential to generate employment for women in the areas, which can help enhance female labour market participation in Bangladesh.

Stakeholders suggested the sector had enormous potential for development through the creation of forward and backward linkages, which would facilitate a high level of comparative advantage for the sector. They also highlighted that agro-processing linked the growth of different services sectors, such as wholesale and retail marketing, transportation, preservation and communications. Therefore, it can generate employment, create supply chains, improve agricultural productivity and enhance the competitiveness of processed export products, which will help reduce rural poverty.

“Bangladesh has potentials to improve agro-processing, which can raise food growers income and reduce post-harvest losses. While rural economy can be boosted significantly as the people can set up small and medium size enterprises across the country,”

Manmohan Parkash, country director of Asian Development Bank (ADB), Bangladesh said. The ADB is providing support to develop a supply chain and development of agriculture sector.

4.4 Sector 4: Light engineering

Light engineering sector of Bangladesh meets about 30 percent of total domestic demand. It acts as a backward linkage for the food processing, railway, shipping, garments, capital machinery, cement, paper, jute, textile and sugar industries. There are three segments of the light engineering sector in Bangladesh:

- domestic manufacturing,
- domestic servicing and
- export-oriented manufacturing.

An estimated 80 lakh technically educated and skilled individuals and entrepreneurs are actively engaged in the sector. The market size is approximately BDT 30,000 core. Around 4,000 SME members of BEIOA is engaged in the production and marketing of light engineering products. Mr. Razzaque also mentioned that attempts to modernize the engineering factories

According to Mr. Abdur Razzaque, President of the Bangladesh Engineering Industry Owners' Association (BEIOA), about 40,000 light engineering workshops or enterprises are present major cities and towns.

are crucial as cheaper foreign products would be dominating the market otherwise¹⁷. According to a BIDS report (2017), the demand for labour for Light Engineering Industries (LEIS) is projected to reach 1,039,200 compared to current labour demand of 698,902.¹⁸

The Light Engineering Sector (LES) has been recognized as an important sector of Bangladesh which has potency to play a significant role in the economic development along with a vast scope of employment generation. Light Engineering Industries (LEIs) has been sprouted in the late eighties and the sector saw tremendous growth since 1985. During late eighties, Government initiated 'Dholaikhal Subcontracting Project' under which public sector enterprises were advised to procure such products from local light engineering workshop. According to the estimate, there are about 40,000 light engineering workshops/enterprises operating all over the country in which around 0.8 million semi-skilled, skilled and technically educated people and innovative entrepreneurs are actively engaged. Most of the light engineering workshops are micro and small, self-financed and employing about 05 (five) persons and managed by the owners. A study on light engineering industries by IFC-SEDF estimates that annual turnover is US\$ 1600 million of which Import substitute products is around US\$ 200 million.

LEIs are supplying the basic elements of an industry, like capital machinery, spare parts and accessories with high potential to export in international market. Beside these, LEIs are now also producing various kinds of import substitute products and services mostly for the domestic market. The products of light engineering sectors are: automobile spares, railway engine & rail line spares, bicycle & cycle rickshaw, Iron chain, machine tools, jute & textile machines and spares, chemical industry machines and spares, sugar and food industry machines & spares, engineering & metal industry machines and spares, marine and ship industry spares, agricultural machines, accessories and spares, plastic and related product machines and spares, electrical goods and accessories, etc.

Prior light engineering sector did not receive policy support to ensure their sustainable growth and development. Problems accumulated in these industries hindering the desired pace of growth and diversification of products. Time has come to treat the light engineering industries as one of the important potential sectors having comparative/competitive advantage over other sectors. It is believed that the growth and diversification of light engineering products largely depends on the policy support, public-private joint initiative for institutional and financial support, availability of technical and business information, innovation and sustainable development of technology and related products, capacity

¹⁷Ahmed, S. (2018). Untapped potential of light engineering. The Independent. Retrieved from: <http://m.theindependentbd.com/post/161945>

¹⁸<https://www.thedailystar.net/business/light-engineering-shows-signs-strength-1605481>

development of industries, research and development facilities and removal of other barriers relating to the engineering sector.

The Light Engineering Sector (LES) that draws the least attention of the policymakers has emerged as a potential cost cutting sector by producing at least 50 percent substitutes of imported items in the country. This important sub-sector is now providing critical support to industrial, agricultural and construction sectors by manufacturing a wide range of spare parts, castings, molds and dices, oil and gas pipeline fittings and light machinery, as well as repairing those. Sector players claim that electrical goods like switch, socket, light shed, channel, cables and electrical fans, generator, which are manufactured by the LES are now meeting 48% to 52% of the country's demands, which was earlier met through import. Export growth was estimated at 30%. The light engineering sector as 'the mother of all sectors,' because it provides backup support to cement, paper, jute, textile, sugar, food processing, railway, shipping, garments capital machineries by repairing and maintaining those. A recent study conducted by International Finance Corporation (IFC) in partnership with UK Department for International Development and Norwegian government shows that LES has in its employment 6,00,000 people involved in 50,000 micro enterprises and 10,000 Small and Medium Enterprises. Another study conducted by Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology, however, estimates that LES comprises of around 40,000 enterprises employing around 8,00,000 people.¹⁹

LES Contribution to various sectors such as Construction, Automobile, Paper & Pulp, Pharmaceutical Mold & Die, Railway, Marine and many more. In a heavily populated country like Bangladesh, it is wiser to go for developing the light engineering sector instead of putting emphasis on heavy industry. Such entrepreneurship could be developed under the wing of small and medium enterprises (SMEs). The units could be set up in villages where electricity is available. Within the range of such industrialization, both productivity and employment at the grass-roots level could be boosted and created.²⁰

4.5 Sector 5: Retail Trade

Bangladesh has experienced a fast-economic growth over the past decade, with an average growth rate of over 6.2% per year. Bangladesh presents a great opportunity in its domestic market and global market too as a promised land. Over the past 15 years it has been witnessing a retail revolution and fast changing retail landscape. The organized retail industry is gradually inching its way forward to be the next most booming sector in Bangladesh like readymade garments; only if

¹⁹http://www.projectsprofile.com/info/potential_one.html

²⁰<https://www.thefinancialexpress.com.bd/editorial/light-engineering-1549382879>

appropriate concerted strategies can be taken. The industry itself has expanded its growth over the past several years and organized retailing is undergoing a metamorphosis and expected to scale up over the next decade.

Bangladesh has an un-doubtable depth of poverty but has been one of the 'Next-Eleven tier' of developing economies keeping industrial development as priority. Modern 'superstores' are the next developing industry in the industrialization of Bangladeshi cities. Bangladesh has been experiencing a retail revolution over the past 13-14 years. Based on the Gain report 2013, the rate of growth of retail in Bangladesh over recent years was 7.0 per cent. The sector is one of the biggest contributors to national employment, at 12%, and has made a 14.3% contribution to the national GDP in 2011-2012, together with wholesaling. The sector made almost 15% contribution to the national GDP in 2016.

Most retail chains are relying on a large pool of Sales and distribution network, which requires employees. Currently, retail stores are conducting online business like Chaldal.com which requires employees who have technical knowledge of software. Also, online businesses require a large pool of youth performing delivery of products. So, this sector has huge demand of skilled labour. Government is currently implementing various interventions where door-to-door service is required. This also creates a demand for labour. Besides these sectors, there are some sectors which also demands labour like Agent banking sector, Hotel and tourism sector, Construction sector, IT enabled services sector like online food delivery, etc. These sectors are assisting to create jobs for people.

The retail sector has traditionally been composed of small family and individual-operated businesses, but modern distribution channels (supermarkets) have emerged over the last ten years. Whilst daily grocery shopping remains very much the same as it has done for years, organized retail (present superstore format of retailing) is undergoing a period of near unprecedented expansion, something that is driving further demand, as well as creating opportunities for further enterprise. Retail stores in Bangladesh, irrespective of product line and price, have begun to appear in diverse shapes and sizes, with convenience stores, discount stores, department stores and superstores a recent phenomenon. Changing tastes and expectations have seen retail shopping move into the realms of being an experience, one where the shopper or visitor enjoys clean air-conditioned and secure surroundings, Some Middle-Class Bangladeshis, who are used to living in gated communities, prefer the new shopping experience at these superstores as they feel more familiar with the shopping style than they would be visiting overcrowded, open 'wet' markets for their everyday grocery shopping.²¹

However, the retailing sector in Bangladesh is undeveloped, structurally weak and

²¹<https://www.nordeatrade.com/en/explore-new-market/bangladesh/distribution>

fragmented, compared to its South Asian counterparts. There is a wide variety of retail stores in Bangladesh, ranging from temporary outdoor stores to modern supermarkets. Below is a classification by type of store:

- Independent grocery stores (about 75% of market share - including village markets). No imported food products are available, except for first price products from India.
- Stalls of city markets (around 20% of market share), selling one type of product (fish, meat, vegetables, fruits, etc.). These stores usually exist in semi-urban and urban areas. Imported foods and processed foods are available but limited to those purchased by the middle class.
- Convenience stores (about 5% market share) located mainly in affluent urban areas, with a clientele made up of wealthy people and foreigners. The offer includes imported food products and high-end local products.
- Supermarkets: They entered the Bengali consumer market in early 2000s. There are about 200 supermarkets, with the first ones opening more ten years ago. Major supermarkets include Agora, Meena Bazar, Nandan, PQS, Shwapno, Kulshi Mart, etc.

In Bangladesh only 20 per cent of high income and social cluster accounts for over 45 per cent consumption and over 15 million people reside only in the capital city, and over 20 per cent of the population which account for 35 million are part of expanded middle class which is more than the combined population of Finland, Ireland, Denmark, Sweden and Norway. Hence, its future potential is considerable.²²

Required Transformation in the Value Chain: At present two types of value chain models are in practice by the local retail chains; these are termed as direct sourcing & indirect sourcing. Direct sourcing has less layers (between producers to end consumers) comparing to indirect sourcing. To explain, in a direct sourcing model, there are 5 intermediaries including producers to end consumers. Whereas, in indirect sourcing, it is 8. This also translates to difference in profitability between two value chains. Typically, in indirect sourcing, supermarkets can claim a profit margin of 10 – 12% whereas in direct sourcing the margin starts from 12% and goes as high as 18%. Another positive side of direct sourcing is that it allows farmers to get a better margin of 3 to 6 % compare to 2 to 4 % in indirect sourcing.²³

Besides these sectors, there are other sub-sectors which also demands labour like Agent banking sector, hotel and tourism sector, construction sector, IT enabled services sector like online food delivery, etc. These sectors are assisting

²²<https://thefinancialexpress.com.bd/views/the-changing-retail-market-landscape-1518803754>

²³<https://databd.co/stories/organized-retail-industry-outlook-bangladesh-2077>

to create jobs for people. At present, nineteen banks have Agent Banking Networks in Bangladesh. These Agent banking networks are recruiting people from rural areas which aids in growing the economy of Bangladesh. Banks have so far set up 5,791 agent banking outlets in the rural areas.

4.6 Employment creation in other sectors

Tourism - The tourism industry is well-known as a composite of activities and services that deliver transportation, accommodation, food, shopping, entertainment and hospitality services available for the travellers. All these activities can enhance the economic development process by creating jobs, developing infrastructure and entrepreneurial skills, improving balance of payments, earning foreign exchanges and export revenues. The direct contribution of tourism to GDP was 296.6 billion taka (1.9 percent of total GDP) in 2014. Furthermore, in 2014, the total contribution of tourism to employment, including jobs indirectly supported by this industry was 3.6 percent of total employment which equals to 1,984, 000 jobs. World Travel and Tourism Council predicted that by 2023, travel and tourism will directly generate 2 million jobs and support an overall total of 4 million jobs, or 4.2 percent of the country's total employment. This would represent an annual growth rate in direct jobs of 2.9%. (http://bida.gov.bd/?page_id=973, <https://www.thedailystar.net/star-weekend/enlivening-the-tourism-industry-bangladesh-1264555>)

Ceramics - Besides readymade garments, leather and other profitable items, ceramics is a growing manufacturing and export-oriented sector in Bangladesh now. The local ceramic industry produces tableware, pottery, tiles, bricks, sanitary ware, electric insulators and other products that have become a part of our daily life. People use ceramic items for their durability and decorative designs. So, there is high demand for ceramic products and the industry is enjoying good response from consumers. More than half a million people, 40 percent of them women, are employed in the industry. (<http://www.theindependentbd.com/printversion/details/168175>)

Telecommunication – Telecommunication sector have generated diversified employment opportunities for the people especially among young generation. At the end of 2017, Bangladesh became the fifth largest mobile market in the Asia Pacific and ninth largest in the world, with 85 million unique mobile subscribers. The mobile ecosystem also provided both formal and informal employment to over 760,000 people in Bangladesh. It made a significant contribution to the funding of public sector activity, exceeding \$2 billion in 2015. More than 30% of the jobs were created directly in the ecosystem, while the rest were generated indirectly in other sectors as a result of the consumption of inputs generated by the mobile sector. It

has created many sub sectors like content providers, local handset manufacturing sector, value added services and innovative transport services such as Uber or Pathao.

(<https://databd.co/profiles/industries/profile-telecommunication>)

Power and Energy sector- This sector is on the rise with the establishment of multiple power plants. So, it is predicted that higher employment will be generated through this sector. BIPPA officials said if they are given the opportunity to invest in the generation sector to achieve the target of 40,000 MW by 2030, it will create 40,000 more direct jobs and another 300,000 indirect ones across the country. They said more than 10,000 jobs have already been created by the private power generation plants in the last 10 years.²⁴

To harness technological advances, capacity-building is important. This is especially the case with frequent disruptive technologies in industries – including utilities which create demand for wider skill sets. Utilities' existing workforces can benefit from the wider use of mobile and digital technology for greater efficiencies, and improved safety. As power and utility business models expand into other areas such as energy efficiency products and services, energy storage, and distributed power, they will need talent to drive their new business endeavours. Hiring is not the only avenue to capture new skill sets. Joint ventures, acquisitions, and alliances too are paths utilities could also use to narrow the talent gap. Others are forging relationships with colleges and technical schools to develop curricula.²⁵

Role of Agent Banking in employment generation - Agent banking has made significant contribution to rural economy over the past few years and it's becoming increasingly popular. People are getting remittances from abroad and they can now pay their utility bills through this channel. Some youth are also finding new opportunities of employment as agents. Agent banking offers limited banking and financial services to under-served population by engaging representatives under a valid agency agreement. It is the owner of an agent outlet which conducts banking transactions on behalf of a bank.

Bangladesh Bank introduced agent banking in December 2013 with the aim of including rural people who were out of the ambit of banking services. Bank Asia was the first private bank to offer the new concept of banking to these people. While talking with Mr. Sarder Akhter Hamid, Head of Channel Banking, Bank Asia, he said “Out of 2900 agent banking outlets, there are 500 outlets where there exist 2 persons in each outlet. So, 1000 people got employed. In the past, Union digital centres did only photocopying and other small works. But now they are serving

²⁴ <https://www.dhakatribune.com/bangladesh/power-energy/2018/12/01/private-sector-dominates-power-generation-with-54-35-contribution>

²⁵ <https://www.dhakatribune.com/opinion/op-ed/2019/06/21/transforming-the-power-sector-of-bangladesh>

people to open bank accounts as well. Interestingly, this model is now encouraging many others to come in agent banking. Dutch Bangla bank has 2800 outlets for agent banking. So, we had a plan to employ 10,000 people directly or indirectly. So, this becomes a new sector of employment”.

So, agent banking not only provides financial services to rural people, it also aids in creating employment opportunities for poor people. Bank Asia currently has 1 million accounts and crossed one thousand crore deposits so far. Currently total 19 banks are providing Agent banking services to rural people in Bangladesh. Banks recruit people as Agents who have knowledge on smart phone and laptop technology. Educational qualification is above H.S.C. In this way, banks are creating jobs for rural people.

Apart from Agent banking, other financial services of banks like mobile banking, bKash, Rocket, etc have also created employment opportunities for people both in urban and rural areas. As these types of services are getting popularity, banks have decided to set up more agent banking outlets that in turn will create more job opportunities for people.

4.7 SME Cluster analysis - Division wise

Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) are treated as the engines of growth and drivers of innovation worldwide. They play a significant role in driving economic growth and generating jobs. In Bangladesh, the sector is changing the face of the economy. SMEs are playing a vital role for the country's accelerated industrialization and economic growth, employment generation and reducing poverty.

SMEs now occupy an important position in the national economy. They account for about 45 percent of manufacturing value addition, about 80 percent of industrial employment, about 90 percent of total industrial units and about 25 percent of the labour force. Their total contribution to export earnings varies from 75 percent to 80 percent. The industrial sector makes up 31 percent of the country's gross domestic product (GDP), most of which is coming from SMEs.

The total number of SMEs in Bangladesh is estimated to be 79,00,000 establishments. Of them, 93.6 percent are small, and 6.4 percent are medium. The 2003 Private Sector Survey estimated that there are about 6 million micro, small and medium enterprises, with fewer than 100 employees. About 60 to 65 percent of all SMEs are located outside the metropolitan areas of Dhaka and Chittagong. SME can reduce the urban migration in the capital and other major cities, increase cash flow in rural areas, and thereby enhance the standard of living

of the rural people. SMEs are widely distributed all over the country which means developing SMEs will play a major role in bridging the urban-rural income gap and contribute towards inclusive growth. The Small and Medium scale industries are considered as a promising sector to eradicate poverty through creation of new employment opportunities and thereby addressing the significant portion of SDGs.²⁶

Apart from the prime sectors, there are some sectors which have growth potential. SME Foundation has conducted a study titled “Cluster Mapping” and identified 177 SME clusters scattered all over Bangladesh. As Sightsavers is working in Dhaka, Chattogram, Gazipur, Narshingdi and Khulna districts, potential clusters of these districts are described below:

Chittagong District

- Rice Mill cluster – A Rice mill cluster is found in Brahmanbaria where total number of operating units are 370. A total number of 11,100 people are working in this cluster, 50% male and 50% female. This cluster use paddy as raw materials for their production and most of the raw materials are local.
- Light Engineering cluster – A Cluster of Light engineering has been identified at Pathantuli-Badamtoli, Chattogram city comprising more than 70 manufacturing units. There are around 9000 skilled and semi-skilled workers employed in this Cluster of which 100% are male. Products of this cluster include Steel furniture, file cabinet, shoe rack, etc. This cluster is growing because of increased demand of manufactured products and availability of skilled laborers.
- Sawmill Cluster - A Cluster having production units of Sawmills has been identified at Kotwali, Comilla. There are 56 units producing timbers and logs of different shapes using tree as raw material. Around 250 workers are currently employed of which 100% are male. This cluster is also a growing one because of increasing demand of timbers and logs.
- Salt manufacturing cluster – A Cluster comprising of production units of Salt refining has been identified at Majhirghat, Chattogram city. There are 54 salt refining units using mud mixed salt as raw material. Around 7500 workers are currently employed of which 100% are male. This cluster is also a growing one because of increasing demand of sea salt.
- Leather cluster - There is a Cluster of Leather shoe manufacturing at Brahmanbaria. Number of enterprises is 100 where around 10000 skilled and semi-skilled workers are working. 100% workers are Male. They produce leather shoes using sole, leather, rubber and foam.

Dhaka District

²⁶

https://plandiv.portal.gov.bd/sites/default/files/files/plandiv.portal.gov.bd/notices/afbf34_be4c_417d_b36c_ecf8db4614fc/ToR%20final%20SME.pdf

- Screen printing cluster - There is a Cluster of Screen printing at Shialbari-Rupnagar residential area in Mirpur. Number of enterprises is 500 where around 2500 skilled and semi-skilled workers are working of which 75% male and 25% female. They use chemical as raw material and currently this cluster is growing.
- Embroidery cluster - There is a Cluster of Embroidery units at Shyamoli, Dhaka City Corporation. Number of enterprises is 175 where around 5000 skilled and semi-skilled workers are working of which 60% male and 40% female. These units produce embroidery works on garments.
- Leather cluster - There is a Cluster of Leather and leather goods producing units at Hazaribagh, Dhaka City Corporation. Number of units is 195 where more than 30000 skilled and semi-skilled workers are working of which 98% are male. These units produce leather goods.
- Shoe cluster - There is a Cluster of Shoe manufacturing units at Club bari, Nawabganj. Number of units is 3000 where more than 30000 skilled and semi-skilled workers are currently employed of which 90% are male and 10% female.
- Plastic cluster - There is a Cluster of Plastics at Lalbagh, Dhaka. Number of units is 1100 where more than 2000 skilled and semi-skilled workers are currently employed of which 90% are male and 10% female.

Gazipur District

- Knitwear cluster - There is a Cluster of Knitwear products at Konabari, Gazipur. Number of units is 130 where more than 8000 skilled and semi-skilled workers are currently employed of which 90% are male and 10% female.
- Sweater cluster - There is a Cluster of Sweater manufacturing units located at Konabari, Gazipur. Number of units is 60 where more than 6000 skilled and semi-skilled workers are currently employed of which 75% are male and 25% female.

Narshingdi District

- Textile mills cluster - There is a Cluster of Textile mills located at Narshingdi. The cluster comprises 100 production units engaged in the production of fabrics and textile products using local raw cotton. A total of 20000 skilled and semi-skilled workers are currently employed of which 90% are male and 10% female. Total turnover is around 600 million.
- Dying and printing cluster - - There is a Cluster of Dying and printing units located at Narshingdi. The cluster comprises 90 production units using colour, dyes and chemical. A total of 45000 skilled and semi-skilled workers are currently employed of which 89% are male and 11% female.
- Textile cluster - There is a Cluster of Textile mills located at Madhobdi upazila of Narshingdi. The cluster comprises 300 production units. A total

of 15000 skilled and semi-skilled workers are currently employed of which 70% are male and 30% female.

Khulna District

- Agro processing cluster – Approximately 4000 flower cultivators producing different types of flowers have been identified at Jhikorgacha area of Jessore district. There are around 40,000 workers are employed in this cluster where 30,000 are male and 10,000 are female. Annual turnover is Tk.20 million. This cluster is growing as flower cultivation has become proved to be a source of self-employment and economic sustainability. The cluster has Electricity, water, road and sewerage facilities.
- Handicrafts cluster - Approximately 1755 families producing handicrafts have been identified at Jhikorgacha area of Jessore district. There are around 2000 workers are employed in this cluster where 100% workers are female. Annual turnover is Tk. 0.2 million. This cluster is growing because of increasing demand of decoration items.²⁷

4.8 Case studies

Khulna Bakery and Confectionary Cluster

Bakery is one of the manufacturing sectors of Bangladesh. Flour based food baked in an oven such as pastries, bread, cakes and pies are made in bakery firms. There are around 7000 MSMEs producing Bakery items in Bangladesh. It plays a dominant role for enhancement of economic growth, especially in case of employment generation, income generation and distribution of necessity foods bakery and confectionery play a crucial role in the beginning stage of industrialization by their backward and forward linkage besides the direct impact on employment and supplying necessary foods in both urban area and rural area. In Khulna, there is a cluster of bakery items. This cluster constitutes of 100 MSMEs that created employment of around 2000 people. They mainly produce bread, cake, biscuit, etc. If Government pays due attention to the development of this cluster, then it will be able to create many job opportunities for people not only in Khulna but also in other regions of Bangladesh.

²⁷ Source: http://www.smef.org.bd/media/publication/sme_cluster_bd_smef.pdf

Cricket Bat Cluster

Mr. Abul Kalam, living in a remote place called Baldia, Pirojpur, came to Dhaka 28 years ago in search of work. He started working at a sports items manufacturing firm, called “Khelar Shathi Sports” and started producing various types of sports items. He started making Cricket bats which sold at a good price. So, he got more orders for producing bats. Then he returned to his village and started making bats with the help of his nephew and some other workers. Currently, there are around 300 cricket bat making factories both in his area and some other areas near to his village. These factories produce 50,000-70,000 cricket bats per year which creates direct and indirect employment of 10,000-12,000 people in his area. So, this is an untapped source of employment which needs Government attention. This cluster helps to strengthen our economy for the last 28 years. This cluster will create more jobs if it gets bank loans, training and marketing support.

Source:

http://www.smef.org.bd/v2/smef_download/cluster_report/Report_Baldia.pdf

Rafikul Islam, A Story of Success but Lost Dream!

Rafikul Islam is a person with hearing disability who is working at Keya Knit Composite in Administration department. He has had a challenging life, even though he was not born with any disability. At the age of two, he suffered from typhoid and lost his ability to hear. Even though Rafikul’s mother only studied up to Class 5 and his father was an engineer, his mother was instrumental in his development. His mother was very positive person and she understood that without education, Rafikul would become burden for the family and society. With her help, Rafikul got admission in Brahmanbaria Deaf and Dumb Jr. High School and continued up to class 5. He also learned to communicate in sign language from the school. After finishing primary education in Brahmanbaria, Rafikul came to Dhaka and finished his S.S.C from Dhaka Deaf High School with the support of his family.

Currently he is working at Keya Knit Composite in Administration department. His daily task is calculating over time and salary for workers. So, he doesn’t need to communicate much with others at workplace to do his job. But Rafikul’s passion is in art and IT based graphic work. When he was studying in Class 4, he participated in an art competition in India and got a silver medal. He also participated in many national and international art competitions and got many awards including gold medal. Moreover, he is also an expert in

AutoCAD and Graphics design. He learned AutoCAD from an organization in Mirpur under the Bangladesh Vocational Training Institute and learned Graphic Design from Erena Multimedia in 2008.

School Going Children Art

Though he has the passion in graphic design and art, but he has to do a job in Admin department. He said he can challenge any person without disability in graphics work but as he cannot communicate directly with the customers, to understand the customer's requirement, he is unable to do the work as per the customers' satisfaction. He feels that if the computer service providing companies or ICT based companies had sign language interpreters in their organizations, a lot of talented persons with hearing disability with the right graphics arts or Auto CAD training could deliver high quality work. He is happy with his current job as he can earn and live a dignified life, but he feels sad that his dream of becoming a graphic artist will remain unfulfilled.

Shima Shikdar, Sewing Operator at Interstoff Apparels Limited

Shima Shikdar, a physically challenged person, suffers from Dwarfism, working in Interstoff Apparels Limited (IAL) as a Sewing Operator since February 2011. Like the other typical Persons with Disability (PwD) of Bangladesh, she had a bitter past; bullied and neglected by the society around her. It was her brother who took her to Centre for the Rehabilitation of the Paralyzed (CRP) at Savar from Kaukhali thana of Pirojpur District. She received training in CRP and then she joined IAL. In the beginning, it was not that easy; just like other beginners she made mistakes and needed special supervision to understand the work, but she did not give-up. Apart from that, in a new work environment she uses to remain quiet and avoid socialization with her co-workers. It is her colleagues and the management team of IAL who supported her in every way to blend in with the workforce and gain expertise in her work; and now she is not only good performer but also received Role Model Award for her outstanding performance. Moreover, currently her leadership skill helps her to become a worker leader elected by the popular vote by her co-workers. This job in IAL has changed her status in her local community as well.

From the early days of employment, she realized the value of education and economic empowerment, which is why even after joining the job here, she

continued her study with the support of her management team and completed Higher Secondary School Certificate (HSC). Shima loves to dream big and she expresses her dream by writing poems. Furthermore, she wholeheartedly loves to help other disabled persons like her by referring facilities of CRP, which created a unique popularity and positive image in her training institute. In future she wants to develop an organization of her own that will dedicatedly work for disabled people and to make this dream come true she has already started saving a portion of her income.

Renesa- a mother, who becomes a change maker for her daughter

Momena is a 15 years old intellectually disabled girl from Kalyapur Thana, Gazipur District who came to our focused group discussion with her mother, Renesa who has become a beacon of light for persons with disability in her society. Renesa, started the discussion sharing her heart wrenching experience of how the society neglected her and her daughter. In our society people believe that having disabled children is a punishment from God for having committed sins and Renesa was continuously cursed her for sins which she never committed. It was her own family members, relatives and the society that portrayed the vilest characterization which was totally unthinkable to her. In the early stage, when she detected that her daughter has intellectual disability, she literally confined herself inside her house to avoid the society. But after a certain period, she came out for the sake of innocent Momena and started facing all odds with confidence and positive mindset; and today she is a face of remarkable change maker in her society. In the beginning, Renesa joined the local DPO (Disable Person's Organization) at Kalyapur to build her own awareness regarding the disability for her daughter. Day after day with continuous collaboration and cooperation with the DPO helped Renesa become independent. Now-a-days, she proactively helps other families, especially mothers who have disabled kids to provide necessary information regarding rehabilitation. Renesa, voluntarily approached her community members for their sensitization and awareness building; and she has been able to create some positive awareness amongst the people. Today, her work is not limited in sensitization and awareness building, she builds up influential reputation to the elected political leaders of her locality to work as a reference for those who are seeking for help to avail government facility like getting govt. ID card for PwD; she provides counselling and recommendation to her community members to provide admission of their disabled children in specialized school or training centres; she continuously reminds the new mothers in her neighbourhood to bring their children to doctors to detect any

disability in early stage. While discussing her work and success stories, she told her a wonderful story which not only protected the future of a disable child but also the entire family, she described the true story in this way- “Recently, one of my neighbours’ husbands has left her because she gave birth to a disable child. She felt helpless, did not know what to do and approached to me and I advised and helped her to get a job to support her daily life. After she start earning, the husband came back and the family is now all set. I think people should have a clear mindset towards disability. There are very few people who help physically and mentally challenged people. Parents of disable people should change their mind towards their children. Only then we can make a change. Surely such relentless and selfless efforts to make change in the mindset of our society regarding disability will raise her to the highest echelon of humanity.

4.9 Job Creation by NGOs in Bangladesh

Non-government organization (NGO), as the term suggests, it is not a government organization, but does much of the development work, hand in hand with the government. Since these NGOs do not have fund for their own, they must depend on the fund of donors who will help them to implement their development initiatives. As a country the status of Bangladesh as a “Developing country” is under revision by the UN Committee for Development Policy (CPD). So naturally in the need assessment of development funds by the local or international donors, there is good possibility that Bangladesh will be lesser priority for a lot of donors. Now, the big question comes how this non-government development organization will continue their work which is still essential for some of the deprived population of the country.

One of the ways to continue the development work is to convert themselves into a social enterprise and start social businesses, which will not have a profit making or enterprise wealth maximization goal. While talking about social enterprise the most successful name that comes to mind is BRAC. BRAC being the world’s largest NGO is now operating on 70% fund from its own social enterprises. BRAC’s ventures like - Aarong, BRAC Dairy, BRAC Chicken, BRAC Seed and Agro, BRAC Artificial Insemination, BRAC Nursery, BRAC Sericulture, BRAC Fisheries, BRAC Recycled Handmade Paper, BRAC Cold Storage, BRAC Salt, BRAC Printing Pack, BRAC Sanitary Napkin and Delivery Kit and Bhumi Bondhu are generating enough fund for their development work as well as creating huge employment opportunity. If other NGOs can develop their own revenue earning ventures, it will create huge impact that will help our country and reduce our need to seek for foreign funds.

In order to encourage the rural poor to participate in different economic activities and to increase their income through employment generation, several policies, methods and strategies of the NGOs have attracted the attention of some foreign development experts. NGOs usually create employment in two ways. First, they provide employment in their own organization since they also need human resource to operate. Secondly, they provide loans and management assistance to individuals, which create new employment opportunity. Currently the projects that are being conducted under the supervision and assistance of NGOs are: Irrigation project for landless, fishery in ponds (khash), Fishing in the coastal area, weaving, equipment supplies for landless share cropper, bee keeping, small business, rice and popcorn production, sericulture, handicrafts i.e. earthen wares, wood and cane works, developing nursery.

Besides, they are providing training to hundreds of men and women on vaccination and treatment of domestic livestock and poultry, construction of sanitary laboratory and slabs; to be mechanics of pump machine or rice/paddy mills etc. Thus, they are significantly contributing in eradication of poverty by providing the above-mentioned essentials.²⁸

4.10 Government job vacancy, prospect of public sector job growth and disability quota

As per the last Labour Force Survey out of the total unemployed youth 5.8% looks for government job. On the hand, currently 18 % of the total government jobs are vacant. Going to the detail the country has 3,120 posts vacant in the ministry level and 198,016 posts are vacant in directorates. On the other hand, Bangladesh government announced a Tk 5.23 trillion budget for the fiscal year of 2019-2020. It is such a huge budget will require more manpower in the coming days. So, there is a huge prospect of new employment generation in the public sector jobs.

Public sector employment quota of 10% for persons with disabilities

The government had declared about two decades back a 10 per cent employment quota for persons with disabilities and orphans. But this quota has never been properly implemented due to the lack of sensitivity of employers about the potentialities of persons with disabilities, contradictory employment policies, loopholes in the system, and a lack of proper monitoring system. A few years back, the Prime Minister of Bangladesh declared a 1 per cent employment quota for persons with disabilities in all cadre service (government) jobs, which has recently been removed based on the advocacy by students against quota system.

²⁸ <https://www.assignmentpoint.com/arts/modern-civilization/contribution-of-ngo-in-bangladesh-economy.html>

The Centre for Services and Information on Disability, a non-governmental organization (NGO), study found that only 5 per cent of the respondents were in government jobs, 17 per cent in NGOs and 66 per cent were self-employed. Only 22 per cent had been able to find a source of financial credit (or micro-credit) support.²⁹

Though the government has abolished the quota system in first class public service, it is preparing a policy for persons with disabilities as well as ethnic and underprivileged groups so that they can easily get government jobs, said Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina in December 2018. She said, "There was a movement against the quota system, and again there was a series of movements a few days later. That's why we had to abolish the system; this is true. But now we're preparing a policy wherein there'll be a priority for persons with disabilities, as well as ethnic and underprivileged groups," The Prime Minister was addressing a function marking the 27th International and 20th National Day of Persons with Disabilities at Bangladesh International Conference Centre, reports UNB.³⁰

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has also announced that the government would arrange allowances for all the differently abled people from this year's (2019) budget. She said, "Insha Allah, we will arrange allowances for all the differently abled people from the next budget," she told the inaugural function of the 12th World Autism Awareness Day at Bangabandhu International Conference Centre (BICC) in Dhaka in April 2019. She also said: "Currently, 10 lakh people with disabilities are getting allowance of Tk. 700 per month from the government, whereas, according to the latest census there are 14 lakh such (disabled) persons in the country." The PM said whatever might be the number, all the people with disabilities, including mentally and physically challenged, autistic and others, will be brought under allowance coverage from this budget.³¹

²⁹ <https://www.hurights.or.jp/archives/focus/section2/2009/03/bangladesh-and-persons-with-disabilities.html>

³⁰ <https://www.thedailystar.net/city/20th-national-day-of-persons-with-disabilities-policy-being-formulated-ensure-govt-jobs-special-people-1668526>

³¹ <https://www.dhakatribune.com/bangladesh/government-affairs/2019/04/02/pm-all-people-with-disabilities-to-get-allowances-from-next-budget>

5. Module 2: Demand for Skills

The economy of Bangladesh is dominated by the private sector which demands a large supply of trained and skilled human resources to maintain high productivity and accelerated growth. Growing demand for skills in industry sectors indicates that:

- a significant segment of the existing labour force does not have requisite skills demanded by occupations, and
- industry sectors may face reduced growth in the future due to lack of appropriate skills. The current skills training systems are also segmented with poor coordination, while their contents need to be more relevant to industry demands.

Before going for in depth analysis, we need to understand the actual meaning of skill. Workers within each occupation can belong to one of the three skill categories: Unskilled, Semiskilled and Skilled.³²

- Unskilled - Needs close supervision to perform any function and does not have an experience of any skilled/semi-skilled job
- Semi-skilled - Can perform only one function without supervision
- Skilled - Can perform more than one function without supervision

In Module 1, we have identified five sectors which are growing. In this section we will analyse those sectors based on skills and qualifications that employers demand. Every sector has certain categories of skills that is required to get jobs in those sectors. Sector wise demand for Skills and qualifications requirement is given below:

5.1 Sector 1: RMG sector

During the last two decades, readymade garment (RMG) sector has contributed significantly to growth of Bangladesh economy. It has also become the major export earner of the country. The industry has been lauded for its success in terms of job creation especially for female workers. To maintain the growth of this sector, this sector must switch towards high value, skill-intensive export items.

In this context, constraints related to physical infrastructure, lack of smooth supply of electricity, shortage or high cost land for industrial use, availability of finance, etc. have drawn attention of the concerned parties. While the availability of low-cost labour has been one of the most important factors contributing to the

³²https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_emp/---ifp_skills/documents/presentation/wcms_554338.pdf

competitiveness of the industry, the future competitiveness and growth of the sector cannot solely rely on the supply of low wage workers without much education or skill endowment.

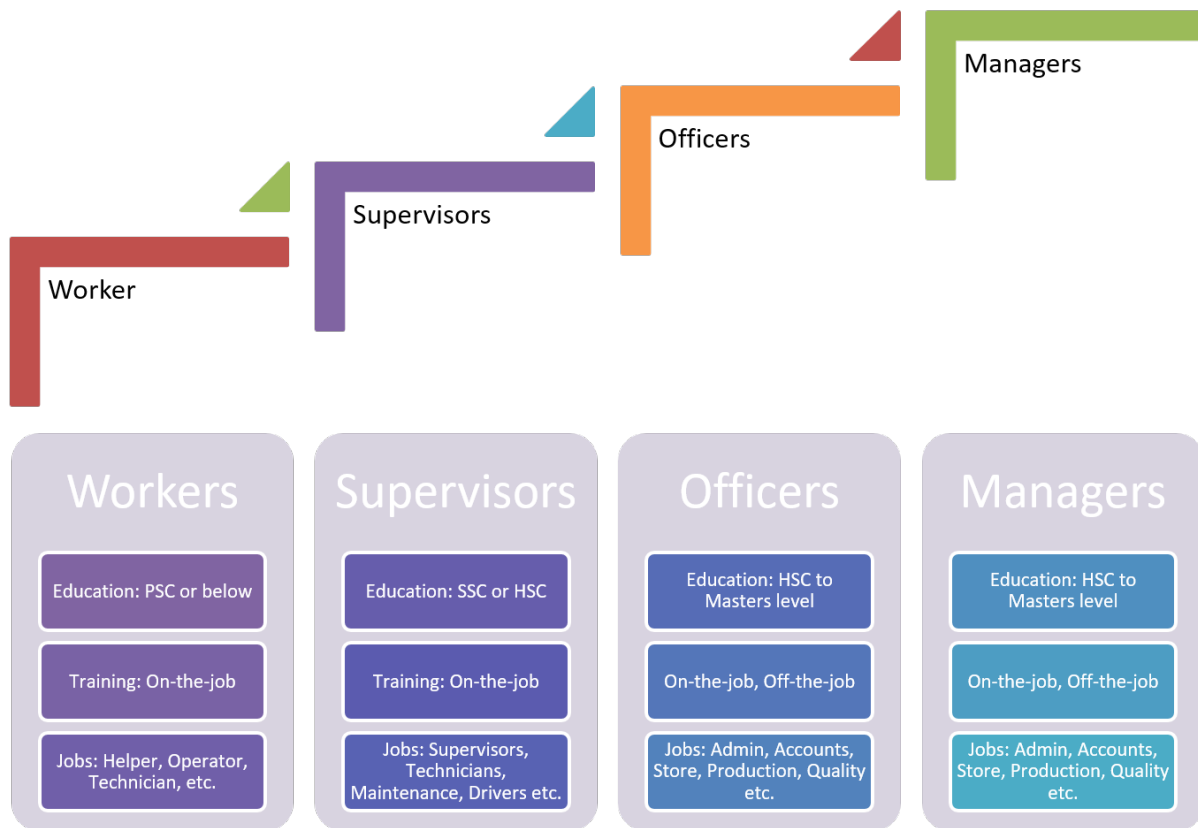
5.1.1 Demand for skills

Several recent studies and reports have highlighted skill shortage as a constraint behind RMG growth. According to Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association, two million new faces are joining the workforce every year. But there is a huge gap between the skills produced by educational institutions and the demand of industries. There is shortage of fashion designers, technicians, dyeing specialists, washing and finishing experts and industrial technologists. The skill gap in mid-level management positions is also significant in terms of communications and managerial skills.

Different studies rounded up and showed about 40% workers are unskilled at the functional level of RMG and Textile manufacturing units. The skill of RMG sector for workforce required in operation, functional, management and strategic level do not match and fit in the conventional higher and post-secondary education system in Bangladesh.

Currently there is skill gap in terms of technical know-how and fundamental skills required for RMG manufacturing jobs such as: operators; supervisors; quality controllers; IT officers; technicians; cutting supervisors and managers; factory managers; HR managers; compliance managers and supervisors; dyeing managers; knitting managers, supervisors and technicians; washing managers, supervisors and technicians, printing managers, supervisors and technicians; embroidery managers and technician; and backward linkage managers, supervisors and technicians for operations involving accessories, buttons, zipper, thread, cartons, polybags, etc. Skills required for operation and maintenance of machineries for dyeing, knitting, printing, washing and embroidery is especially high because the machines are highly sophisticated. Moreover, the technologies involved in these machineries are constantly being upgraded creating a need for skill up-gradation.

RMG Sector Jobs



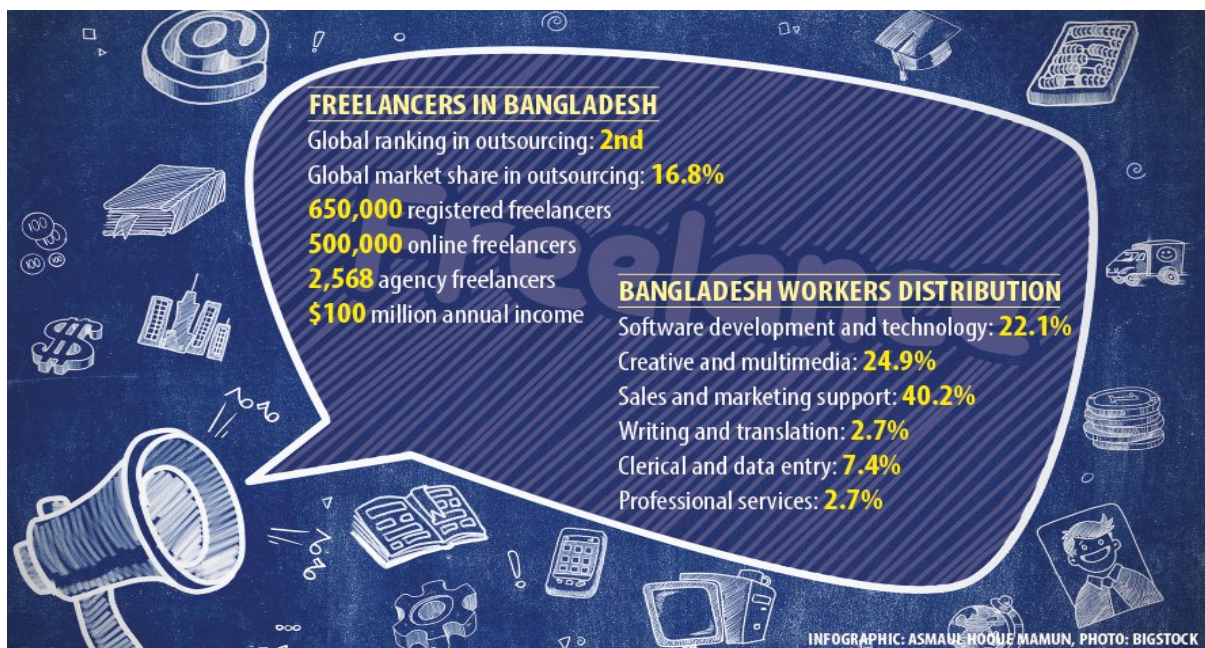
As Buyers' preferences are frequently changing due to diverse preference, taste and demographic changes, Bangladesh would require more skilled and semi-skilled workers, technical and professional experts to obtain that market for balance and sustainable growth of RMG sector. The demand for skill workers is increasing. Local training providers lack the capacity to meet the increasing demand for skill workers. Though unskilled workers get opportunity with gradually improving and accomplishing primary skill, but it is increasingly difficult for the factory due to cost pressure and lack of training resources.

To keep minimum, the skill gap in RMG sector, an international standard 'State of Art' institution, 'BGMEA University of Fashion & Technology', established for education, training, research and development to produce highly qualified, dynamic, technically knowledgeable and skilled human resources for RMG sector.

In Bangladesh there are 3 specialized Private and Public Universities as well two Engineering Colleges dedicated to Textile Engineering Education Colleges as well Private Universities with School of Textile engineering operational to meet the demand of this sector at Mid and Entry level management however to meet the skill shortage at the operational and Functional level.

5.2 Sector 2: ICT sector

The Bangladesh government envisioned to create a “Digital Bangladesh” by 2021 which has become the buzzword of development. The widespread use of the term clearly signals the government's emphasis on the development of the ICT sector. In 2002 Bangladesh identified ICT as a "thrust sector" as it represents potential for quick wins in reforms, job creation, industry growth, improving governance and facilitating inclusion, and it has high spill over effects to other sectors. In this pursuit, the government formed a separate ministry in 2011 and employed a huge amount of resources for the development of the sector. Bangladesh's ICT sector comprises of IT (software), ISP, Call centres, Telecommunications and hardware sectors.



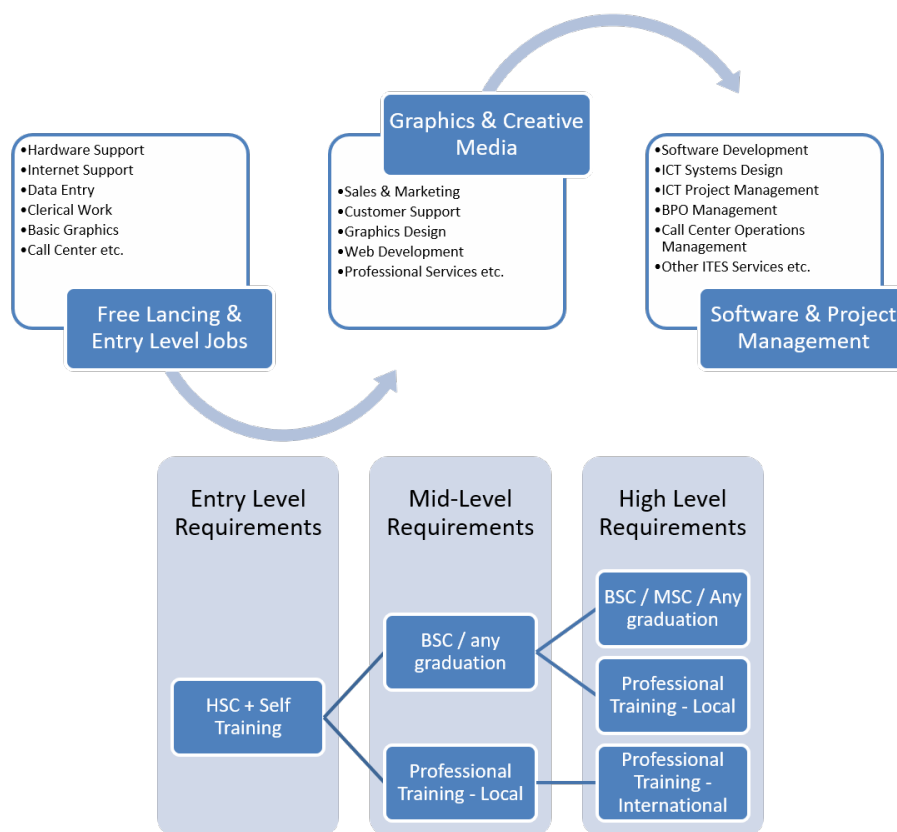
Source: <https://www.dhakatribune.com/career/2017/09/20/freelancers-turn-bangladesh-hub-ict-outsourcing>

The IT services industry within Bangladesh has been growing, serving international and domestic clients in the banking and telecom sectors. Bangladesh's emerging IT outsourcing players already have strong credentials, and the Bangladeshi freelancer community has supplemented IT exports. Bangladesh is consistently ranked among the top freelance work locations on employment websites like oDesk, eLance.

However, lack of good talent and weak infrastructure hinder the growth of IT firms in Bangladesh. Most of the IT firms in Bangladesh are relatively new and small-sized and a small number of international IT firms operate on a limited scale. While weak IT infrastructure and branding are issues, Bangladesh lack skilled workers

at different levels in quality and quantity. As the IT sector in Bangladesh is growing rapidly, there is a shortage of ready-trained talent. Most companies plateau around 300-400 full-time equivalent scale, with around 100 employees having technical knowledge and capabilities, and leverage the freelancer pool to handle overflow volumes, skills development turns out to be a colossal problem. One salient reason for that is the unavailability of good, quality training institutions. Many of them are currently unable to respond to the market needs. Nascent market conditions are likely to be challenging with respect to prevalence of middle-level management, experienced resources, and presence of ancillary services (e.g., recruiters and training providers). In fact, the recent Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies (BIDS) report clarified that IT sector require University graduates, and there is a huge demand for programmers, system analyst, software engineers and quality assurance specialists. Similarly, existing supply of project and product managers (mid-level professionals) and graphic designers is in shortage. For software firms, the most commonly required IT skills include JAVA, Net, HTML5, ASP, JSP, Ruby, Python, C/C++/VC, CSS3, Mongo DB, Postgre SQL, Node JS, Big Data, other database software/applications (MS SQL, Oracle, UNIX/Linux/Solaris, XML), and mobile applications (Android, iOS, J2ME). According to industry stakeholders, these are the areas on which more training programs need to be designed and administered.

ICT Sector Jobs



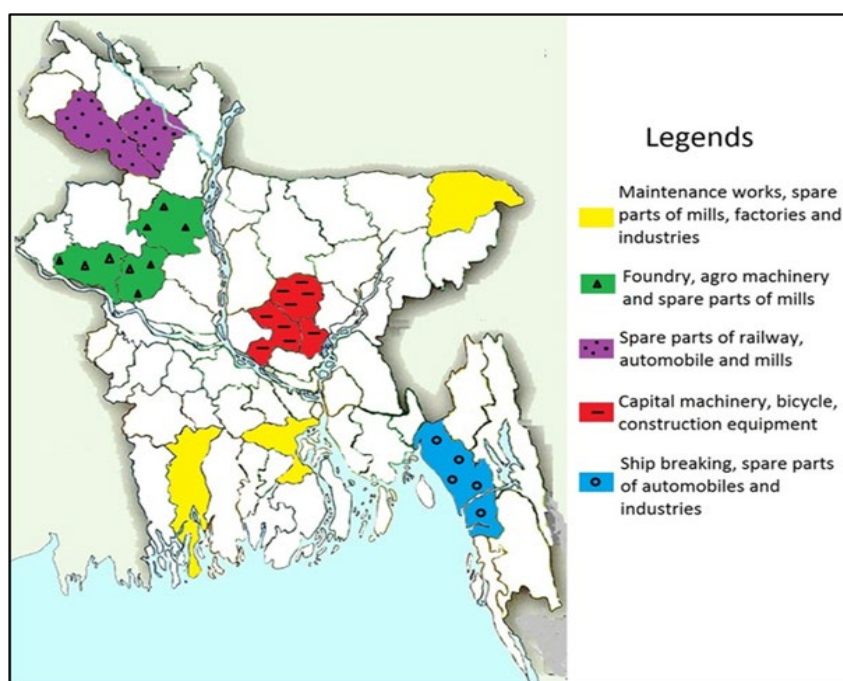
Moreover, employers have mentioned two types of skills shortages:

- Not enough graduates in specialized skills needed within high growth sectors, and
- Where graduates have these skills, they are still not employable because skills in English language, computer, communication and problem-solving abilities are absent.

To tackle the issue of skill gap in the IT sector, coordinated efforts are required from the academia, the industry and the Government. There needs to be a match between industry expectations and expectations of job seekers in the IT sector. To begin with, the industry can set standards by developing a qualifications grid, a salary range, and detailed skill requirement for positions in IT companies as they reach out to universities for recruitment, or when they advertise their posts. The required skill sets and qualifications grid would enable students and graduates to better manage expectations, while providing academia with an up-to-date list of required skill sets with which to adjust its curriculum.

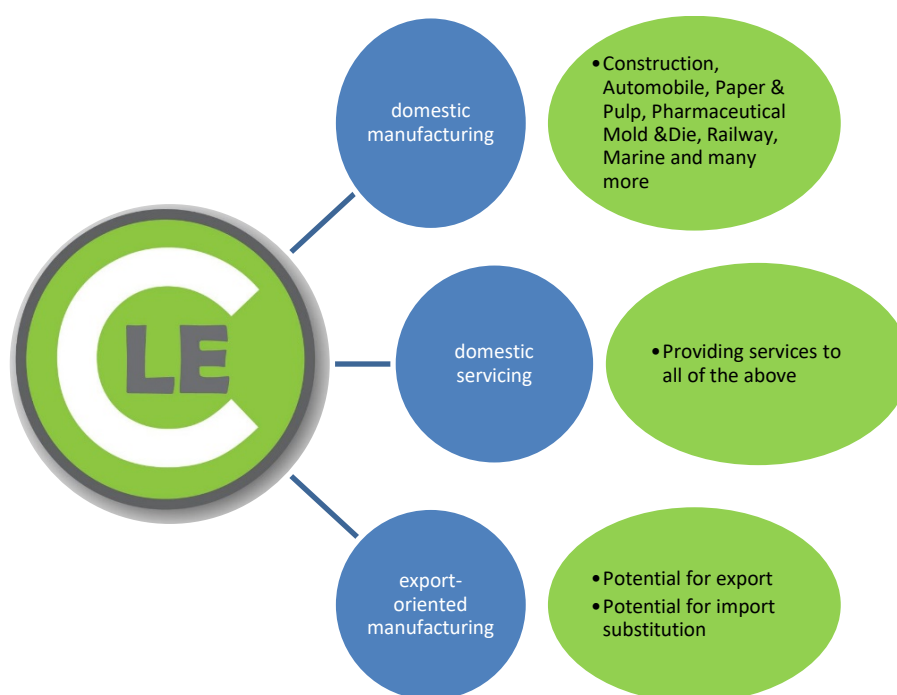
5.3 Sector 3: Light Engineering sector

Light engineering is an important sub-sector of manufacturing. It provides critical support to industrial, agricultural and other sectors of the economy by manufacturing a wide range of spare parts, casting, molds and dies, oil and gas pipeline fittings, light machinery, etc. and by providing repair services.



Source: Light Engineering Industry in Bangladesh: A Case Study, BIDS

Light engineering enterprises of Bangladesh can be divided into three major categories: (i) foundries, (ii) machine shops, and (iii) repair workshops. Foundries are mainly producing irrigation items like metal casing of pumps, liners for engines, different components of engines, pumps and power tillers, etc.; agricultural product processing equipment like rice hullers, oil expellers, paddy threshers, etc. and various types of small spare parts for different engines including automobiles and other industrial machineries. Machine shops cast iron as basic materials and do the machining jobs. Repair workshops are doing different types of repair jobs required mainly by agricultural, industrial and transport sectors.



Source: <https://www.pexion.com/clitheroe-light-engineering-joins-plexion-group/>

5.3.1 Value Chain Analysis for the Light Engineering Sector

Light engineering occupies a unique position in the economy of Bangladesh. This sector has huge potentials to make significant contribution towards technological breakthrough along with wide opportunities for employment generation and growth of gross domestic product (GDP). Some key features of light engineering are the following:

- Around 40,000 light engineering enterprises are operating all over the country, which are engaged in the production and manufacturing of highly value-added engineering goods and services with annual turnover amounting to more than TK. 30,000 million.
- The 7th Five Year Plan has provided great importance in this sector for

poverty reduction and employment generation

- Around 6 lac people are directly employed in this sector

This sector primarily employs fresh unskilled workers without any formal technical education. They are developed as skilled workers through on-the-job training. Most of the entrepreneurs are less educated and only a few of them are formally trained and lack management and innovative skills. Currently, some of the entrepreneurs aspire to install modern CNC technology to target local big corporate houses and international market through improving product quality and quantity. Due to lack of skilled workforce in CNC technology, especially programming, operation and troubleshooting, these entrepreneurs are not able to procure CNC technology.

5.3.2 Skills requirement

Most important occupations in light engineering industry (LEI) are: lathe machine operator, welder, milling machine operator, industrial electrician, master craftsman, CNC engineer/operator, AC technician, foundry worker, fitter, shaper, heat treatment plant operator, electrician of discharge machine (EDM), surface grinder, CAD-CAM designer and others (wire cutter, helper, planner and composite materials combiner).

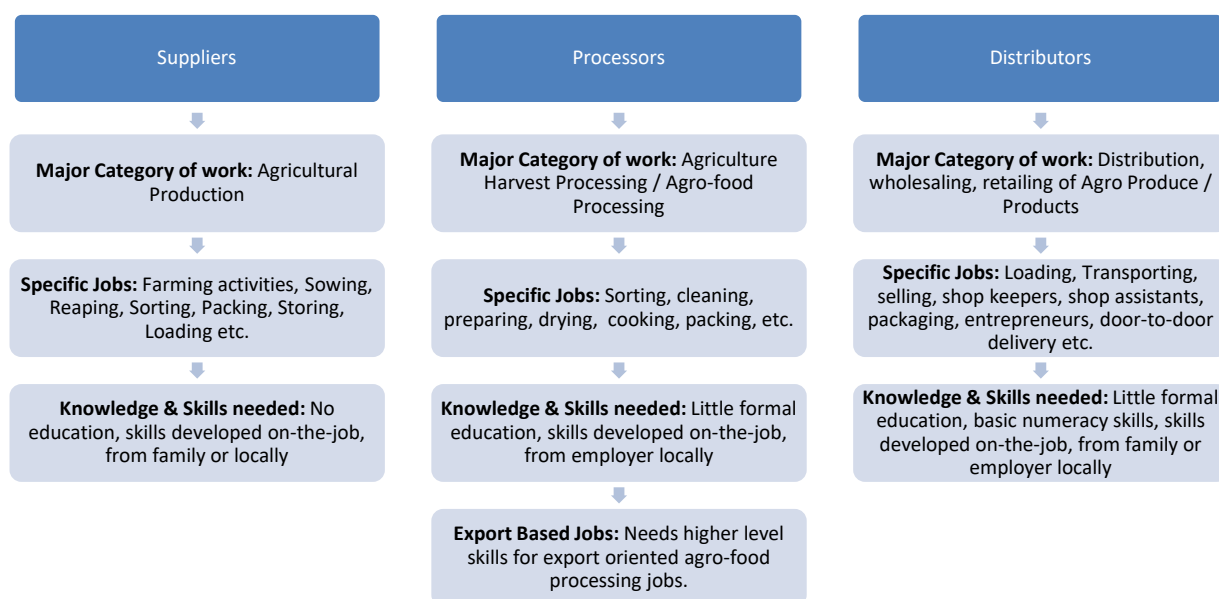
LES firms have no research and development (R&D) outfit and facilities necessary for technical improvement and competitiveness, and lack contacts with international R&D companies. However, they have a huge potential for moving up the national, regional and global value chain. Much of this will depend upon formation and development of future skills in the sector.

5.4 Sector 4: Agro-food processing sector

Food processing for commercial purposes and market sales had always been a major economic non-farm activity in Bangladesh. With increasing urbanization and globalization, the demand for processing of various types of agricultural food commodities into other kinds of food for domestic consumption and exports has arisen and become much more perceptible than before. With this trend there had also been the rise of automated processing facilities while previously most of these were small scale and the processing was manual. The Government has been aware of the problem of labour availability in this sector and has already made various types of interventions in terms of policy, institutionalization and investment for training facilities. With the advent of larger and increasingly automated establishments catering to regional and national demand and for the international market, and because of the necessity of preservation of wholesomeness of food,

the necessity for better skilled, formally trained labour has arisen.

Figure 6: BoP People's participation in the Agricultural Value Chain



5.4.1 Value Chain Analysis

Value chains for agro-food industries are typically rather complex, with several middlemen involved between the usually small-scale producers and the processing firm. The complexity of the value chain poses challenges for many agro-food companies to ensure that they get the type and quality of raw materials they need at the right time. Stakeholder responses from firms revealed that managing inbound logistics, including relationships with suppliers, cold chain, and transport management, is seen as a major challenge by the industry.

5.4.2 Skills requirement

The agro-food manufacturing sub-sector is relatively labour intensive. But the labour must be skilled due to demand for hygiene and food safety and the rigorous standards in particularly export destinations. There is a supply side issue in terms of human resource development, i.e., skill development of labour in the sector.

Skills are required in following categories:

- Export marketing, product management, channel management
- Supplier capability
- Product development
- Operational effectiveness and food safety

- Regulatory compliance
- Logistics / supply chain / cold chain
- Regulation

Types of skills that employers demand in the above-mentioned categories are described below:

Export marketing, product management, channel management

The need is for marketing and sales skills at a variety of levels, from call centre staff to process orders and deal with routine issues to senior executives capable of setting international marketing strategies, running effective international sales and marketing operations, and establishing and managing relationships with retailers, industrial customers (e.g. for food ingredients), agents and distributors in international markets. There will be a significant requirement for marketing professionals with skills in export marketing, product management and channel management. All of these will require some specialist expertise in food business, science and technologies, with product managers needing significant knowledge of food science, consumer tastes, supply chains, food safety and other specialist areas, as well as marketing. Marketing skills required span industrial and consumer marketing.

Supplier capability

Improved skills in harvesting, handling and packing of basic agricultural products are needed, along with advice on issues that may include use of agricultural inputs, timing of planting and harvesting, and choice of plant varieties, among others. Maintaining very high standards with the basic raw materials and requisite training and awareness thus becomes extremely important.

Product development

The main skills required in food product development are at professional level in food business (including marketing), food science and food technology/engineering. Typically, they have a relevant degree plus significant food industry experience. Packaging is an important aspect of product development. This implies demand for specialist skills in technical and marketing aspects of packaging design. People with these skills may be employed within the agro-food business itself

Operational effectiveness and food safety

Improving capabilities in operational effectiveness and food safety requires development of skills at all levels within production operations, notably including:

- Operatives, supervisors and production technicians
- Quality control and quality assurance staff

- Laboratory technicians
- Production managers
- Scientists and engineers
- Trainers

More specifically, key areas where skills development is required are the following:

Food safety training and certification for all in operations, at levels appropriate to their role;

- Training to support improvement initiatives, undertaken as part of the initiative. An example of such an initiative is the Kaizen initiative that has been undertaken with support from the TVET Reform Project.
- Training in materials handling and processing technologies for those already working in the sector.
- Technician training in laboratory and machine operations, making use of the food technician qualification established at the initiative of the TVET Reform Project where feasible.
- Bachelor's degree courses in food process engineering and industrial engineering.
- Initiatives to develop or update skills in food process engineering and industrial engineering among people already working in the sector, including executive education courses, activities by professional societies, and professional networking activities.
- The agro-food sector has significant numbers of apprentices, but most are employed and trained without formal registration under the 2008 Bangladesh Apprenticeship Training Rules. The sector should move to comply with the Rules and should receive technical assistance to do so.

Regulatory Compliance

Major skill needs relating to regulatory compliance are:

- Skills in quality assurance and documentation of compliance for quality assurance specialists; and
- The skills in food safety and safe food handlings described earlier, backed up by the skills required to document compliance where appropriate, and by an approach to work that favours strict compliance.

Logistics / supply chain / cold chain

Skills in logistics and supply chain are required at a range of levels. The key requirement is for high level logistics and supply chain professionals capable of designing and optimizing logistics systems, and capable of the wider job of

developing supply chains that integrate upstream with farmers and farming groups (and in some cases with intermediaries) and downstream with customers in export markets. The quality of the work done by logistics and supply chain professionals will have a major impact on the competitiveness of exporting industries.

Regulation

Upgrading the capabilities of Bangladesh's food safety regulatory systems is likely to require more staff at a range of levels. At senior levels, it will be important that at least a proportion of staff are very well qualified, capable of making sound judgments on food safety and public health, and capable of leading an organizational culture that enforces regulations effectively and ensures that inspection regimes are effective in checking compliance with standards and good practice, and in ensuring that corrective action is taken when problems occur. At other levels, it is important that staff should be technically competent in areas such as laboratory analysis of food samples, inspection of food processing operations and sampling of food products. It is important that they should be conscientious and able to withstand pressure to overlook poor practices or to facilitate agro-food businesses in improperly passing inspections.

5.5 Sector 5: Retail Trade sector

Retail environment in Bangladesh can be segregated into two streams; organized retail and unorganized retail. Although the entire industry has shaped around unorganized retail over the years, organized retail is gradually becoming popular to the new generation convenience seeking consumers. While the local mom and pop shops (In Bengali *Mudir Dokan*) are still larger contributors to turnover of consumer goods, super shops are slowly turning those customers into their value chain while creating new customers as well. Modern consumers now want a roomful of choice in a comfortable, hygienic environment and are less prone to take the price haggling challenge which is resulting the demand for supermarket.



But modern Retail sector in Bangladesh faces major challenges – skill gap, lack of strategic direction, lack of technology adaptation, policy implication complexity – just to name a few. These challenges stall the growth momentum of this highly potential sector.

5.5.1 Skills requirement

Retail skills are required for a variety of retail jobs like Cashier, Sales Associate, Retail associate, Retail buyer, Retail Manager, Store manager, etc. Persons having extensive knowledge about the retail industry, products, shop management are highly required. Three types of skills are required to avail jobs in this sector. They are:

- Business awareness

Business awareness means having in depth knowledge of how the Retail industry operates. Knowledge and skills regarding product sourcing, rotation, shipping, payroll is extremely important.

- Communication and listening skills

Retail industry focuses on serving customers as per their choice and preferences. So, Communication and listening skills are very much important to get jobs in this sector as this sector directly deals with the customers.

- Knowledge on IT

At present, Supershops like Agora, Meena Bazar use electronic register or POS. So, persons having clear knowledge on IT can excel in this sector. As the number of Super shops is increasing, so the demand for this type of persons is also increasing.

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6. Supply of Skills

Skills, knowledge and innovation are key driving forces of economic growth and social development of a country. Countries with higher levels of education and skills can respond effectively to challenges and opportunities in the global economy. Bangladesh, despite of attaining consistently high growth rates of above 6% over the last five years and making remarkable progress in several human development indicators, is still a long way off in possessing a skilled workforce. Bangladesh struggles to make a connection among education, training, skills and jobs in a way that will help to create enough decent jobs.

6.1 Workforce in Bangladesh – Present situation

The workforce in Bangladesh adds up to about 60 million. Over two million young people are entering the workforce each year. Although access to education has grown, most of the working population is without general education or occupational skill training. According to the recent Labour Force Survey 2016-17, 29.3 per cent of the total employed workers in the domestic labour market had no formal education. More than 15.7 million employed workers (25.8 per cent) had completed some or primary education, while more than 18.7 million workers (30.8 per cent) had completed secondary education. The survey also showed that about 85.1 per cent of the total employed persons aged 15 or older were in informal employment, while only 14.9 per cent were in formal employment.

Again, the demographic dividend that has been created in Bangladesh has

produced a large working-age population that will need adequate education to support a modernized economy. Demographic dividend refers to the growth in an economy that is the result of a change in the age structure of a country's population. The change in age structure is typically brought on by a decline in fertility and mortality rates.³³ In Bangladesh, this phenomenon has been occurring since the 1970s. The large working-age population implies that if decent employment opportunities are available, the country can be more productive collectively, as more people contribute to overall economic activity.

Skills available in Bangladesh

Three types of skills are available in Bangladesh which is important for both youth and experienced workers. They are:

- Foundation skills
- Transferable skills
- Technical and vocational skills

These skills are mutually complementary and are acquired in different ways—through formal education and training at different levels; on-the-job through work experience and vocational/technical training; non-formal training, and informally through family and community and via the communications media.

Foundation skills: The foundation skills include functional literacy and numeracy skills generally acquired through primary education. These skills are prerequisites for continuing in further education and training, and for acquiring transferable and job-specific technical and vocational skills. It cannot be taken for granted that increased access and participation in primary and secondary education necessarily produce the foundation skills; essential by themselves and as precondition for acquiring and upgrading job-specific skills.

Transferable skills: Transferable skills refer to competencies that enable learners to solve problems, communicate ideas and information effectively, learn to work in teams in a collaborative way, and conduct oneself with basic discipline in the workplace. These skills also include being creative, taking initiatives when appropriate, show leadership and conscientiousness, and demonstrate entrepreneurial capabilities. Acquiring computer and basic information technology (IT) skills are also seen as essential transferrable skills. These skills enable young people to adapt to different work environments, take advantage of job-specific training, and improve chances of being gainfully employed. The transferrable skills are generally acquired through general secondary education and formal

³³ <https://www.investopedia.com/terms/d/demographic-dividend.asp>

vocational and technical education programs which are aimed at broad, rather than job-specific, vocational preparation. As in the case of foundation skills, the expansion of secondary education and formal vocational-technical education cannot be regarded as a guarantee of meeting the needs of transferrable skills. Deficiencies in the quality of programs, resource limitations and weak management and organizational capacities remain major obstacles to producing the quantum of transferrable skills of acceptable quality.

Technical and vocational skills: These refer to skills and technical know-how related to specific occupations and jobs. The training programs related to these skills are expected to prepare people to be directly employed in specific jobs or occupations. Training and skills development of this category are carried out through formal vocational and technical institutions offering relatively long-duration courses, as well as short training programme of various duration imparted through formal or non-formal programs, and through various on-the job-training programmes, including formal and informal apprenticeship.

Policies for skill development in Bangladesh

The Government of Bangladesh has prepared three separate policy statements which have relevance to skills development:

- Non-Formal Education Policy (NFE) Policy 2006,
- National Education Policy 2010, and
- National Skills Development Policy 2011

All these are related to objectives and strategies regarding different aspects of formal and non-formal education and training opportunities for young people. They also converge in recognizing the importance of skills for life and livelihood through lifelong learning with a poverty reduction emphasis (MOE 2011).

The policy initiatives, while pointing at the right direction, are yet to show concrete results in transforming TVET to address the problem of a mismatch between skills and jobs. The problem originates from a combination of two kinds of factors: a) deficiencies in basic foundational skills arising from primary and secondary education quality and the quality of vocational training on offer, and; b) Inadequate market linkages characterized by a limited participation of the employers in designing training (NORRAG-BIED 2015).

Another area of concern and policy weakness is the lack of enough and systematic effort to prepare workers for overseas employment and raise their skills profile to improve their earning and working condition.

Some half-a-million male workers and 100,000 female workers are estimated to

have gone overseas in 2015. Their annual remittance has topped USD 15 billion, ensuring a healthy foreign currency reserve for the country. Most of these workers going abroad are of low skills, thus working with low wages and in vulnerable conditions. For ensuring demand-supply matching for migrant workers from Bangladesh in terms of skills and competencies, it is necessary to develop relevant training structures that will be responsive to the needs of the destination countries.

The National Technical and Vocational Qualifications Framework (NTVQF) has been developed in order to assess comparability of qualifications acquired from different institutions and by different means. This is also necessary to align the qualifications acquired by trainees with the changing occupational and skill profiles in both domestic and international labour markets.

Sources of Technical Training

Both Public and private sectors offer various training courses for workers. For example:

TVET System-The Directorate of Technical Education (DTE) offers 13 different types and levels of TVET through government institutions under the Directorate. The Directorate of Technical Education (DTE), the Bureau for Manpower, Employment and Training (BMET), and the Ministry of Youth are the main public TVET providers. At least sixteen other ministries also provide skills training. The Bangladesh Technical Education Board (BTEB) is the statutory body responsible for regulating quality and standards of TVET. Besides these, NGOs and the private sector offer courses which can be described as non-formal. Private providers make up 95% of total TVET institutions and enrol about 75% of the students. Over 3,000 private providers are accredited by BTEB, in contrast to some 200 public institutions. About one third private providers receive government support, covering basic teacher salaries. About 500,000 students are enrolled in formal TVET. The Bureau for Manpower Employment (BMET) operates 38 technical training centres focusing on training workers for overseas. Many courses range from a few weeks to six months. A popular one is the basic trade course of 360 hours over six months.

The Skills Development Project attempts to bridge the gap between the training in institutions and the requirements of the employers and the market. It is being Implemented by the DTE in partnership with Industries and NGOs. The project has attempted to develop competency standards, assessment tools, and curriculum involving industries in the RMG, Light engineering, Construction and informal sub sectors. .

According to Bangladesh Labour Force Survey 2016-17, an estimated 1.9 million

persons (about 1.7 per cent of the total working age population) have participated in a formal training course outside the general school system. Around 49.3 percent (with 44.8 per cent female and 52.1 per cent male) have taken training on computer courses, followed by office management, at 18.6 per cent, craftsman, at 7.7 per cent, RMG, at 6.0 per cent. These trainings are mostly provided by private institutes, at 75.6 per cent, followed by the government institute, at 15.2 per cent and NGOs, at 4.6 per cent.

Table 3: Sources of training

Sources of training	Overall trained (%)
Government institute	15.2
Private institute	75.6
NGO	4.6

Source: Bangladesh Labor Force Survey 2016-17

Quality of Education and Skills training

Many industry participants have serious concerns about the basic level of education of their employees. There is substantial evidence that these concerns are not simply the griping of employers who would always be happy to have better workers. Only 25% of grade 5 students master Bangla, and only 33% master mathematics competencies (World Bank 2013). There are substantial regional differences in educational performance. Students in Dhaka and Chittagong do better than the national average, but those in Rajshahi and Sylhet lag (World Bank 2013) behind.

There are still limited linkages between employers and most institutions that provide TVET. This has led to little responsiveness of TVET provision to job market demands—with no systematic feedback concerning industry requirements and no tracer studies of graduates, there is little scope for such responsiveness. The formal TVET track reaches a limited portion of the labour force because it requires grade 8 level, though recognition of prior learning is in the process of being adopted.

The capacity to train instructors is extremely limited, leaving many under qualified. At the same time, opportunities for in-service training are few, so that unqualified instructors are likely to remain so. Salaries are low, and many teaching positions are vacant—the vacancy rate for sanctioned positions may be as high as 50% (ADB 2015).

While TVET has expanded rapidly, there has been little assurance that greater learning has accompanied the greater number of seats. While many lofty goals have been set at a high level, those have not translated easily into improved educational outcomes. Further increasing the scale of TVET seems unwise at present until quality assurance can be improved. While some institutions and

some public–private partnerships have been successful, there is limited evidence that a large proportion of the many students in TVET institutions are acquiring the skills that they need to succeed in a growing and diversifying economy.

6.2 The issue of skill mismatch

It is widely accepted that labour-market outcomes are often imperfect and are unable to produce perfect demand-supply equilibrium, which results in a noticeable imbalance between acquired skill levels and existing occupation categories. In Bangladesh, the general education curriculum is not purposely designed to produce graduates with skills for employment. Because of this, the level of education acquired by students does not have any direct relation with the on-the-job skill requirement of the employed workforce for the most part.

According to Bangladesh Labour Force Survey 2016-17, among the employed males, an estimated 26.5 per cent of them had completed their primary education, 30.4 per cent who had completed their secondary education, and 6.1 per cent who had graduated university education. The School-to-Work Transition Survey results show that under education rates are especially high among young managers (65%), young professionals (62%), and young technicians and associate professionals (92%), which mean that they had not received the level of education expected for their jobs. The large proportion without any education and only a quarter with more than primary level education do limit the possibility of skill development through training programs and upgrading and adaptation of workers to changing skill demands.

At the same time, employers' perception is that the products from the vocational system are not meeting their needs; that the system continues to produce graduates for old and marginal trades, which have no market demand, while skill needs for newer trades remain unmet (Ahmed, et al. *Ibid.*). According to Enterprise survey, 2013 of World Bank, there is a serious lack of skilled applicants in higher-skilled occupations, such as, in Managers, Technicians and Associate Professionals and Professionals categories. In Bangladesh, there is a significant level of skill-mismatch in all the major economic zones of the country. Finally, in the context of Bangladesh, the degree of unemployment can be structural, rather than cyclical, in nature.

To solve skill mismatch problems, one of the most crucial solutions could be to align the existing curriculum with current market demand and future market trend. In this context, policies, such as, strengthening the collaboration between vocational institutes and industry (as practiced in Thailand and China); involving industry-sector representatives in designing curriculum (as practiced in India); and linking secondary education with the TVET programmes, through an effective

collaboration between the Ministry of Labour and the Ministry of Commerce (as practiced in India), would be useful.

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7. Module 4: Systems and Stakeholders

This section will explain the roles of Labor market stakeholders through Education to Work Transition process. After explaining the process, this section will provide an overview of Disability assessment along with an analysis of lower representation of disable people in formal employment.

Education to work transition process refers to the process of moving from education to employment, covering the time in which this change takes place.

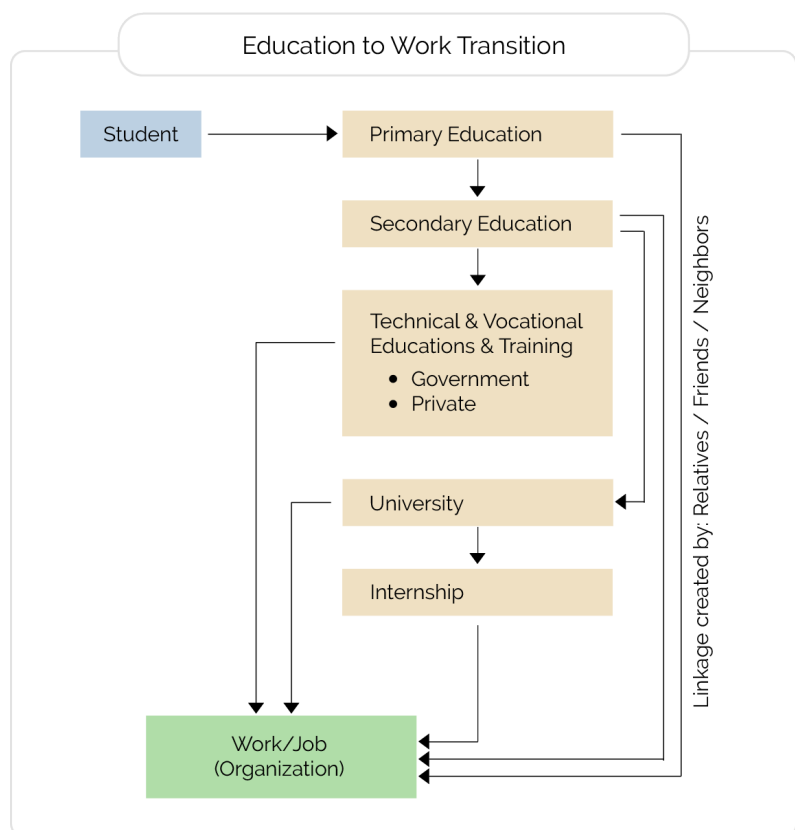


Figure 7: Education to Work Transition Map

From the above figure, we can see that two types of stakeholders exist – Student and Employer and their roles change in different time period. A full-time student

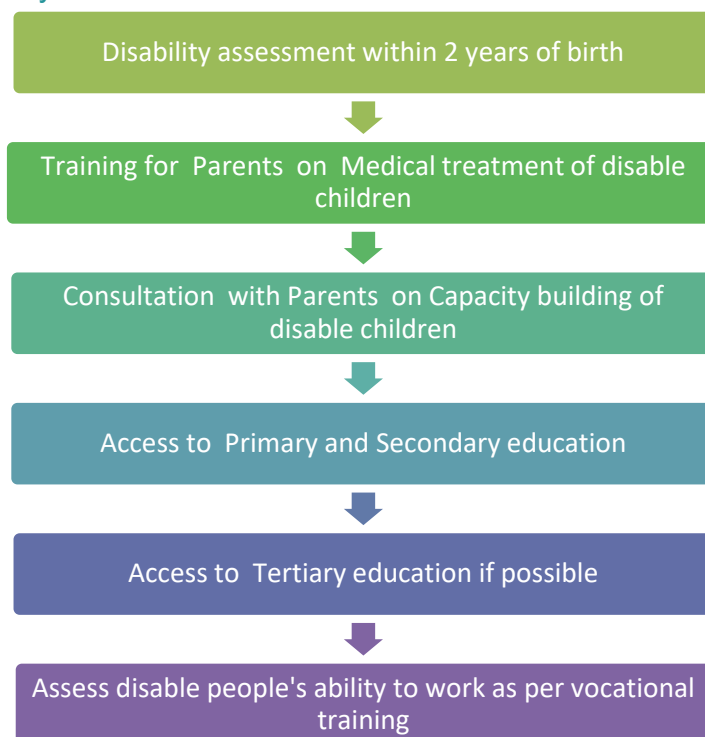
has only theoretical knowledge, not the practical experience of jobs. By taking training on career development from academic institutions, students can become aware of his/her career goals and starts doing internships at various organizations. At this stage, he/she becomes an adult learner who has practical workplace experiences. Employers recruit them to the formal jobs by giving orientations and then a student becomes a Professional employee. After getting experiences in the same role, he/she moves to new role at the same company or switch to new company. In this map, another type of learner exists – Disable/Handicapped learner. They are also an important part of Labour market, but our society often fails to recognize their special needs which creates restrictions for them to enter into the job market.

In the next phase, we will describe the process of Disability assessment and the reasons of having lower number of disable people in formal employment sector.

7.1 Disability Assessment

Disability assessment is integral for identifying needs of disable people and thereby taking appropriate measures to include disable people in formal employment sector. Various stakeholders exist in this assessment like Families of disable people, Government, Private sector, NGOs, BPOs, etc. The assessment starts with identification of disability among children. According to Ministry of Social Welfare, Parents/Caregivers should check and identify disability of their children within 2 years of their birth. DPOs and NGOs can provide training to the Parents of disable children on type of Medical treatment needed for disable children. DPOs should work on changing the mindset of Parents by creating awareness on Disability and providing training on how to increase capacities of disable children.

Figure 8: Disability Assessment Process



Parents of disable children should enrol their children in schools and colleges to have basic Primary and Secondary education. In this stage, both Government and private sectors can play an important role in ensuring access to education for disable children. Without basic education, it is impossible to include disable people in formal employment. To ensure basic education, government should provide training to teachers to make the schools and colleges disability inclusive. Based on the type of disability, tertiary level education should be provided to disable children. If any disable child does not adjust with this system, then Parents should admit them in vocational/technical training institutes. Various TVET institutions provide skills training to disable people. By taking sector specific training, disable people can join in formal jobs. Parents should also assess whether their children can adjust with the work environment or not.

In this total process, certain limitations exist specially in DPOs. They cannot always make a linkage between the employers and disable employees. Bangladesh Business and Disability Network has taken many initiatives like job fairs for disable people but, this is not effective. Some of the disable people get jobs in Garments factories but due to lack of reasonable accommodation disable people leave jobs. As a result, the retention rate of disable employees is still very low. So, the whole process falls in a vicious circle of systemic constraints.

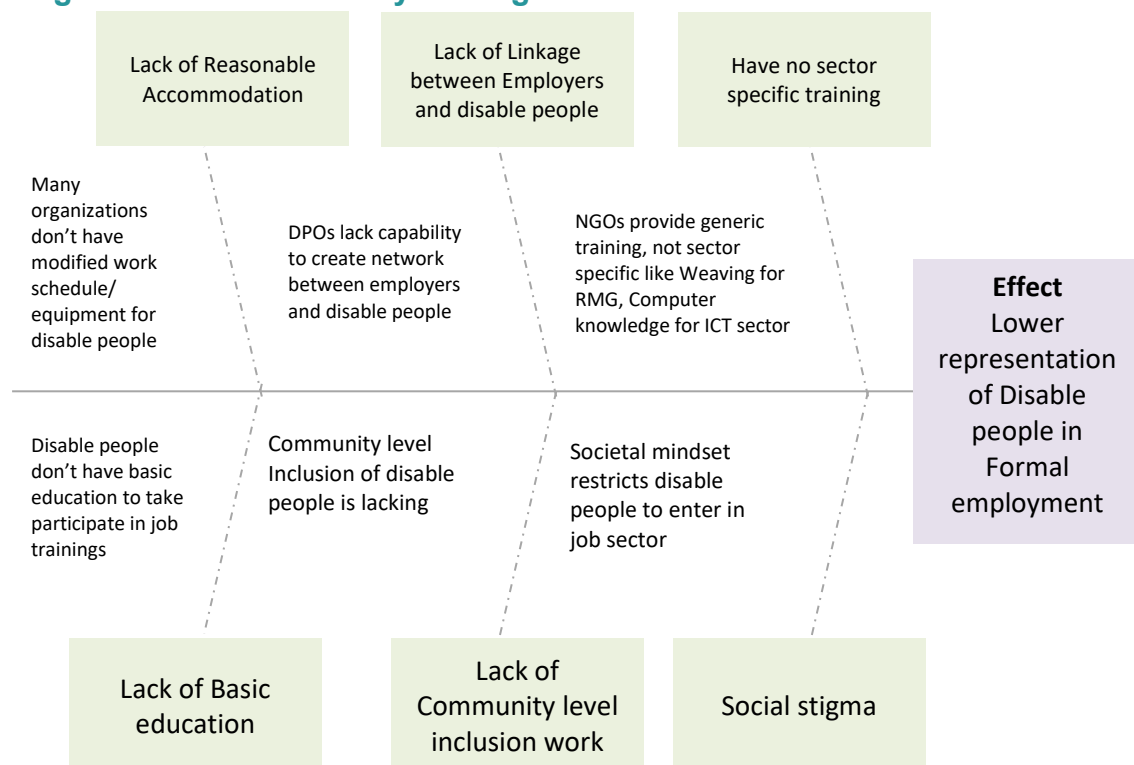
Lower representation of Disable people in Formal employment -Key Findings from KII and FGD

We have conducted KIIs and FGDs with various relevant stakeholders of Labour market like Government employees, Private sector, NGOs, DPOs, People with Disabilities and identified some reasons of not having enough disable people in formal employment. Reasons are identified by considering

- Employer’s perspective
- Government’s perspective
- DPO’s perspective

All the reasons are showed using Fish bone diagram where we have listed the main reasons and the background scenario of those reasons. The Fish bone diagram is given below:

Figure 9: Fish bone analysis diagram



Based on the findings of FGD and KII, we have identified the above-mentioned reasons. Though both private and public sector are working on disability inclusion in formal employment, but still representation of disable people is not significant. Employers told that they want to recruit disable people but due to lack of sector specific trainings, disable people leave their jobs. NGOs provide training on overall work environment, coping mechanism but they don't provide any skill specific

training. Again, organizations also don't want to train disable people because a certain amount of cost associated with it. Government and NGOs told that they have training centres but disable people cannot take those trainings due to lack of Primary and Secondary education. Reasonable accommodation is another challenge for disable people as many factories do not maintain modified work schedule for disable people. They do not have supporting equipment for disable workers. Many initiatives are implementing in Urban areas but in rural areas the situation is different. So, rural level disability inclusion is important. All these causes make a depressing scenario where presence of disable workers in formal employment is not satisfactory.

Job creation is the main driving force for poverty alleviation. In the light of Article 15, 25, 38 and 40 of the Constitution of the People's Republic of Bangladesh and according to ILO conventions, the Government is determined to take steps to make labour policies more responsive to labour welfare. For this, the Ministry of Labour and Employment (MoLE) has taken a range of pragmatic steps to implement the Vision-2021 to fulfil the basic needs of workers, alleviate poverty rapidly, empower women, create employment and skilled manpower, fix minimum wages by taking into account of the inflation and growth rate and eradicate hazardous child labour. These steps are expected to improve the welfare of labourers, through socio-economic development of labour, create a skilled work force and increase employment and productivity.³⁴

8. Module 5: Policies and Regulations

8.1 International Policy level framework

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights has enunciated by the UN General Assembly on 1948 and Bangladesh, as a signatory, is working to promote human rights of its citizens. This declaration serves as a common standard of achievement for all peoples and all nations, to the end that every individual and every organ of society, keeping this Declaration constantly in mind. Article 23(1) states that, "Everyone has the right to work, to free choice of employment, to just and favourable conditions of work and to protection against unemployment."¹

In line with this Declaration, on 13 December 2006, the United Nations General Assembly formally adopted the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), the first human rights treaty advocating for the rights of Persons with Disability (PwD). Bangladesh became a signatory and ratifying state

³⁴ https://mof.portal.gov.bd/sites/default/files/files/mof.portal.gov.bd/page/3ef1111d_f0d6_41ea_aca9_6afb61228825/G-2_02_31_Labour_English.pdf

party to the CRPD on 9 May 2007 and 30 November 2007 respectively. The Convention is intended as a human rights instrument with an explicit, social development dimension. It adopts a broad categorization of persons with disabilities and reaffirms that all persons with all types of disabilities must enjoy all human rights and fundamental freedoms. It clarifies and qualifies how all categories of rights apply to persons with disabilities and identifies areas where adaptations have to be made for persons with disabilities to effectively exercise their rights and areas where their rights have been violated, and where protection of rights must be reinforced.² Under Article 27 of the CRPD, the State is obligated to:

- Recognize the right of persons with disabilities to equal opportunities to work including to work freely and be accepted in a labour market and work environment that is open, inclusive and accessible to PWDS.
- Safeguard and promote the realization of the right to work, including for those who acquire a disability during employment.
- Enable persons with disabilities to form trade unions and have effective access to general technical and vocational guidance programmes, placement services, career advancement options, vocational and continuing training; opportunities for self-employment and entrepreneurship.

In addition to this, Bangladesh is also working to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. Disability is referenced in various parts of the SDGs and specifically in parts related to education, growth and employment, inequality, accessibility of human settlements. Among 17 Goals, SDG 8 deals with promoting sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all, the international community aims to achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all women and men, including for persons with disabilities, and equal pay for work of equal value.³ **Goal 10** strives to reduce inequality within and among countries by empowering and promoting the social, economic and political inclusion of all, including persons with disabilities. **Goal 4** focuses on inclusive and equitable quality education and promotion of life-long learning opportunities for all focuses on eliminating gender disparities in education and ensuring equal access to all levels of education and vocational training for the vulnerable, including persons with disabilities.

8.2 National Policy Level Framework

The Constitution of Bangladesh 1972 secures the right to equality before law and equal protection under law for all and sets out the duty of the state to undertake. Freedom from all kinds of discrimination have been guaranteed in Article 28 of the

Constitution. Under the Constitution, persons with disabilities, like all other persons, are guaranteed the right to life and personal liberty, rights on safeguards on arrest and detention and speedy trial, protection from torture and cruel inhuman and degrading treatment, freedom of movement, association, assembly, profession and occupation, religion and expression. The Fundamental Principles of State Policy act as a guideline for the State in making policy. Article 11 states that "Fundamental human rights and freedoms and respect for the dignity and worth of the human person shall be guaranteed". Article 14 places a responsibility on the State to free vulnerable sections of the population from all forms of exploitation. Article 15(d) expressly recognizes the right to social security for all which includes Persons with Disability (PwD). The state is obliged to provide such security in cases of unemployment, disablement, illness and old age.

Recognition of Disability Rights: In 1993, the Government of Bangladesh adopted 'The United Nations Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities'. As early as 1993, the Government established a National Coordination Committee on Disability under the Ministry of Social Welfare. It adopted the National Disability Policy in 1995 and to ensure equal participation and pave increased opportunities for persons with disabilities. Based on the international commitment, the Bangladesh Government declared to observe the National Disability Day in 1998, which was implemented from April 1999.

The Disability Welfare Act came into force in 4 April 2001. A National Coordination Committee on the Rights and Protection of Persons with Disabilities (responsible for coordinating all disability initiatives by the Government of Bangladesh) then adopted a National Disability Action Plan on Disability 2006. In 2013, the Rights and Persons with Disabilities Act came into force, repealing and replacing the Disability Welfare Act of 2001. The new law has to an extent adopted the provisions of the CRPD and it marks a transition to a more rights focused approach than the earlier welfare-based approach of the 2001 Act. The Act not only has a broader definition of the nature of disabilities but also sets out the rights of persons with disabilities in more detail covering the fundamental rights as well as the cultural, social, economic and political rights. Furthermore, the Act vests duties on various committees for better protection of rights of persons with disabilities in a regional and national level and the Schedule of the Act lists out the State's obligations for establishing such rights. The Neurodevelopment Disabled Persons Protection and Trust Act 2013 provided for a trust to be set up to benefit people with neurodevelopment difficulties and established the right of persons with such disabilities to avail the benefits provided under the Trust that includes their nurture, security and rehabilitation.

In March 2002, Government of Bangladesh declared a set of short-term and long-

term activities for the welfare of the persons with disabilities. These include:

- Establish separate ticket counter at railway station, bus terminal, river port, launch-steamer port, airport and air office to ensure the easy transport access of the people with disabilities throughout the country.
- Reserve specific number of seats in bus, train, launch and steamer for the people with disabilities.
- Fill up the 10% quota at government service for orphans and people with disabilities.
- Open a complain box at department of social service to stop the harassment of the people with disabilities.
- Construct slope way (ramp) to ensure the easy access of the people with disabilities of every government office.
- Overrule all the barriers for the people with disabilities in the recruitment process of 1st and 2nd class government job.
- Start micro-credit program by every nationalized bank for the people with disabilities.
- Ensure that every government organization who will be the possible user of plastic products produced by the Maitry Shilpa under the social service department should purchase the products without any tenders.
- Increase the government's financial grants to the National Foundation for Development of the Disabled Persons (NFDDP) up to 20%.

8.3 Laws and Policies regarding disability rights

The 2013 Disability Rights Act defines 'accessibility' (Section 2 (13)), in line with the CRPD, as including:

- physical accessibility into all premises (public and private including open space and buildings) and the ability to use public transport without restrictions, as well as
- unrestricted access to opportunities and services, information, data, technology and any form of communication.
- regarding accessibility to public transport, the Act requires owners, authority, drivers or conductors in charge of the transport to reserve 5 % of seats (on boats, airplanes and land transport) for persons with disabilities. (Section 32(1))

The Bangladesh National Building Code 2008 also contains disabled friendly construction rules and guidelines. The definitions on 'accessibility' and 'adaptability' comprehensively cover facilities or any part of them that can be

approached, entered and used without assistance by persons with temporary or permanent physical limitations. They also provide for adaptable spaces/features designed for persons with physical limitation to have access to adaptable toilets, kitchens, lifts and so on.

The Right to Information Act, 2009 gives every citizen the right to access 'information' (as defined in Section 2 (d) (f) of the Act) from any 'authority' (as defined in Section 2 (b)). It includes two disability friendly provisions. Firstly, an 'officer in charge' of any missing word shall aid a person with sensory disabilities to enable them to gain access to information (Section 9(10)). Secondly, any information published or publicized by any authority under the Act, must be indexed in a manner accessible to all (Section 6(1)).

The National ICT Policy, 2009 expressly aims "to create mainstream social advancement opportunities for disadvantaged sections of the society including persons with disabilities and special needs (Article E.1 "Social Equity"). It provides that everyone shall have the opportunity to access all electronic technologies used in creating, storing, processing, communicating and disseminating information (Article3).

8.4 Policy implementation

Government of Bangladesh is now very conscious and become proactive on the need for appropriate policies, laws and plans for the education, training and rehabilitation of the persons with disabilities (Persons with Disabilities). Accordingly, various measures have been taken suiting the needs of PWD's.

Initiative of NFOWD

NFOWD (National Forum of the Organizations Working with the Disabled) coordinates among the voluntary organizations in Bangladesh and advocates for legislation and other facilities for the development of the disabled. 320 organizations are actively involved in this Forum as member of its General Council. The Forum has already achieved some successes and advocated strongly in favour of Persons with Disability (PWD). The Forum has taken initiative to collect, assimilate and disseminate information on disability issues to and from various sectors. As per their plan of action they organize workshop/seminars/Conference to promote the activities for the Development of the persons with disabilities.

Medical Care

Government of Bangladesh has incorporated appropriate provisions for prevention of avoidable disablement and proper Medical and rehabilitation

measure for PWD's in the National Health Policy. In medical college hospitals and medical centres including all health care centres and institution has given the directives from the department of health to take care of the disabled in relation to health and medical issue. Child development centre including early intervention related activities has opened in Dhaka Shishu Hospital and all the Medical Colleges. A new Department has recently opened in the Bongobondhu Medical University for taking care of the children with Autism Spectrum Disorder. The title of the department is "Department of Neuro development and autism."

Training and Employment

Government has made adequate provision in the National Policies for people with disabilities to create employment opportunities. Further Government has made quota of jobs for the people with disabilities in category 3 & 4 of the Government services. NGOs have taken community Based Rehabilitation (CBR) program for gainful employment for the people with disabilities in rural Bangladesh. Recently Government has developed inclusive vocational education and training for the persons with disabilities. Promotional activities for expatiating the inclusive vocational education and training (IVET) is now on the way to activate under National skill development policy and Technical vocational education and training (TVET) under Ministry of Education. Ministry of Education is starting this programme as focal Ministry and Ministry of Labour and employment, Youth and Sports, Ministry of Women and Children affairs is working closely with this programme.

Assistive devices

Government has established an Assistive Device Production Centre and NGOs have also set-up similar programs to meet the growing demand of assistive devices for persons with disabilities and self-advocacy program.

8.5 Role of Ministry of Social Welfare (MoSW)

The goals, strategic objectives and activities of the MoSW are adopted in line with the underlying principles of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs); Universal Declaration on Human Rights 1948; Convention on Child Rights 1989; UN Convention on Rights of Disabled Persons 2006; 7 th five year plan, Perspective Plan, National Social Welfare Policy 2005; National Policy on Disability 1995; the National Child Policy 2011, the National Women Development Policy 2011, the Person's with Neuro-Developmental Disabilities Act, 2013. MoSW has inter-Ministerial Committee dedicatedly working for the welfare of disable people. They have an Autism Cell which works specifically for Autistic children. MoSW has taken various initiatives under Social Safety Net Program. One of the initiatives is "Cash Transfer System" for disable and disadvantaged people. They had conducted a door to door census to identify disable people and started

providing an allowance of BDT 700 per month to disable people. Total number of disable people in Social Safety Net Program is given below:

Table 4: Number of Disable beneficiaries in different safety net programs (2017-18)

Social Safety Net	Amount	Total number of beneficiaries	Number of women beneficiaries
Allowances for the Financially Insolvent Disabled	700 (Monthly)	8,25,000	3,18,450
Stipend for Disabled Students	750-1300 (4 instalments)	80,000	37,080

Initiatives for Children with Neuro developmental disorder

Currently, MoSW is implementing a project in collaboration with UNICEF titled “Child Sensitive Social Protection in Bangladesh” (CSPB) which focuses on the development of Children with Neuro developmental disorder and early detection to other types of disabilities.

Identity Card for Disable people

After discussing with relevant stakeholders, we found that under Social Safety Net program, persons with disabilities now have their own identity card.

Schools for Visually impaired people

In the field of visual impairment, the Department of Social Welfare runs several schools located at the former four divisions: Dhaka, Chittagong, Rajshahi, and Khulna. These schools have a total capacity of admitting 500 children and provide hostel facilities of a total of 180 children who receive free room and board at government expenses. In addition, the Department of Social Welfare also has a scheme for the education of visually impaired students with their sighted peer in 64 normal high schools all over the country. The scheme provides one resource teacher and a resource room to each school where the teacher works to help visually impaired students in overcoming any difficulties. Under this scheme a Braille Press, donated by the American Foundation for Overseas Blind, has been set up in Dhaka. These Braille books are supplied free of cost to students of all schools for the visually impaired.

Schools for Hearing impaired people

In the area of hearing impairment, the Social Welfare Department runs 7 schools in Dhaka, Chittagong, Rajshahi, Khulna, Chandpur, Faridpur and Sylhet. The schools have a capacity to admit 700 children and provide residential facilities for about 180 children. These schools provide education up to primary level and instruction in painting and other suitable crafts.

National Disability Complex

Special needs of disabled and girls are being highly considering in construction of new buildings. National Disability Complex is one of such special needs sensitive building which is under construction.

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9. Module 6: Alignment between Demand & Supply of Skills

In recent times, skills development and coordination between demand and supply of skills have become major challenges to achieve its visions. Skill development not only enhances and expands an individual's capacity of earning, the formation has the potential of transforming the nation's workforce into a more productive one and thereby contributing immensely towards the growth momentum of an economy. It, however, is not a short-term or temporary phenomenon, but should be treated as a cumulative process which begins at early stages of life and can continue over the entire lifespan through several avenues (World Bank, 2014).

Research has shown that Bangladesh is earning about \$5 Billion by exporting 8 million plus semi-skilled and or un-skilled workers abroad (mainly to the Middle East and South East Asian countries). Because of this skill gap India remitted \$10 billion in 2017 from Bangladesh. Our country became the 4th largest remittance source for India since we couldn't manage skilled workforce for our job market. This indicates that we are lagging in terms of creating mid-level and technical capacity workforce required by our corporate houses.

According to a recent study conducted by BIDS titled "Labour Market and Skill Gap in Bangladesh" labour demand has been projected to increase from 63.5 million in 2016 to 88.7 million in 2025. The rapid increase in projected labour demand is the result of high projections of GDP growth, which has been assumed

to be sustainable with the same elasticity of employment as experienced during the last decade. From the year 2021, labour demand will be in excess of supply of labour in Bangladesh. In fact, Planning Commission has also estimated that during the Seventh Five Year Plan period, labour demand generation would be in excess of supply. The Asian Development Bank (ADB) also mentioned that Bangladesh is in skills shortage in a study conducted in 2015.

BIDS (2016) showed in another study i.e. Skill Gap Analysis for Selected Sectors that, existing skill gap is the highest in the agro-food sector followed by the RMG Sector. Skill gap for “skilled workers” is also high (40%) in the IT and leather sectors where this is a constraint. Generally skilled workers and semi-skilled workers are in short supply in every sectors of Bangladesh. The same study projected that demand for skilled workers would be in

- agro food sector will be increased to 261%,
- construction sector it would be 54%,
- healthcare sector 54.95%,
- hospitality and tourism sector 35%,
- IT sector 100%,
- leather goods sector 107%,
- light engineering sector 76.95%,
- RMG sector 122.6%, and
- shipbuilding sector 677% in 2025-26 fiscal year.

From the above study findings, it’s quite clear that, to meet the visions (2021, 2030, and 2041) Bangladesh must develop skilled manpower in every sector. Few other studies identified that demand for overall manpower in Bangladesh would be higher than its population growth. That means overpopulated Bangladesh is becoming manpower shortage country within next one decade.

Role of Government Institutes

To meet up skills gap government is trying to restructure overall education system of Bangladesh. Technical and vocational education system is given priority over general education. Cash incentives are given to the technical education students along with other instrumental support. But performance of the vocational institutes throughout the country is miserably poor. Quality of education in technical and vocational sector became questionable. Graduates from these institutes are becoming idle due to their poor performance in the industry. This education system is unable to meet up-to-date demand of the industrial sectors. As a result, graduates are remaining unemployed. On the other hand, industries are recruiting foreign professionals with valuable foreign currency to meet concurrent demand of the world competition in respective sector. Based on the result of the a2i project regarding the skill demand of next 5 years, BTEB is taking initiative to modify their

curriculum to align with future market demand. National skills development council (NSDC) was established and upgrading it into National Skills Development Authority (NSDA) is under process. National Skills Development Policy (NSDP) was adopted few years back. Updating curriculum of technical and vocational education board is under process.

Role of NGOs and Private institutes

NGOs such as UCEP, for example, have developed strong linkages with industry - far more so than government institutions and agencies - and reap for their graduates' great benefits from doing so. As an example of private sector facilitated TVET, the Bangladesh Garments Manufacturers Export Association (BGMEA), in association with UNICEF and ILO, has established a Garment Workers' Education Program to provide basic education and vocational education (to those who qualify) to former child laborers in the garment industry. The Program meets half the cost of the courses provided, while the other half is met by the students or their families.

Without governments direct support; private sector cannot afford the cost of training for an employee during his working hours. As a result, local professionals are remaining backdated in absence of up-to-date training facilities; finally, they are remaining under performer. Government could allow Private Sector to adjust the cost of capacity building of their employees from the applicable corporate taxes on them. Government may enact 100 hours mandatory training act to facilitate skills development of the professionals working in private sector. But that 100 hours cost should be adjusted from corporate tax applicable on respective organizations. Otherwise skills development in massive scale will remain a need never be achieved.

Private Sector shall be encouraged to establish technical institutes with up-to-date modules and laboratory facilities. Government should allow foreign investment in capacity building sector of Bangladesh to facilitate technology and managerial capacity transfer. A massive revolution is required to draft and adopt competitive course curriculum, modules, trained teachers, laboratory facilities, industrial attachments and other necessary tools of skills development.

Some of the private sector initiatives are given below as examples:

BGMEA University of Fashion & Technology (BUFT): BGMEA initially established a training institute of its own, the BGMEA Institute of Fashion and Technology (BIFT) to meet the requirements of its industry, including the need to increase the efficiency, productivity and product value of the industry. Keeping this high demand of experts and skilled workforce in mind, the Government of Bangladesh and the Bangladesh Garments Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA) visualized the need for creating a centre of excellence that

will provide training, research, innovation and development services in aforementioned fields. The noble board of trustees laid the groundwork for what would become today's BGMEA University of Fashion & Technology (BUFT) on July 9, 2011, when the group gathered to hold the University's inaugural board meeting and drafted the University's articles of incorporation. This guiding document outlined elements the founders believed would build an enduring legacy for the University: a commitment to offering a rigorous academic program and an ambition to provide opportunities of higher education in all disciplines of knowledge to persons of both sexes on equal terms.

Centre of Excellence for Bangladesh Apparel Industry (CEBAI) is a new institution set up by Bangladesh Garment Manufacturer and Exporters Association (BGMEA) under an ILO project with the support of SIDA, H&M and BGMEA. One of the major tasks of CEBAI is to address the challenges the RMG sector faces to increase its exports and contribute towards a more rapid economic development of the country. In short, the sector would have to deal with world statistics and requirements on RMG. Such an endeavour would need the services of academicians, researchers, engineers and industrialists. With this concept in mind, CEBAI was established and officially launched by the Honourable Prime Minister in December 2014, signifying the importance that the Government had accorded to it.

CEBAI is a registered organization with a fully independent Board composed of members of BGMEA, BKMEA and other stake holders of the apparel industry, the academia, media and other stake holders. The institution has collaboration with the University of Dhaka and Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology and has their representatives on the CEBAI Board. To have contributions from the Government, workers and other stakeholders, the Chairman of Technical Education Board, Director Technical Education and Chairman NCCWE are also included in the Board.

Centre of Excellence for leather Skill Bangladesh Ltd (COEL) is the nation's first institute of its kind. Objective of COEL is to increase and improve the overall skill level of the workforce of the leather sector. The training centre of COEL is situated at Pallibiddut, Chandra, Gazipur which serves as the hub of COEL's Leather Skill Training Programs. For now, this 12,000 Sqft area has an up to date setup to carry out professional training program for 300 trainees at a time. Other than the main training centre COEL with collaboration with the interested factories are in the process of establishing sub centres to increase the productivity of the respective factories. Driven by the needs of enormous skilled labour force and increased growth of the leather industry, a group of key industry stakeholders formed a formal committee as Industry Skill Council (ISC) with the facilitation of EC funded TVET Reform Project of ILO, an initiative of Government.

Source

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10. Module 7: Barriers to Disability Inclusion

Disable people face obstacles from the early stage of their lives from family and society. Due to social stigma, they don't get access to basic rights – Healthcare, Education, Job, etc. After conducting interviews with policy makers, employers of public and private institutes, we have realized that disable people face several problems while entering the labour market. We will describe the barriers from three perspectives:

- Barriers in Government Systems
- Barriers from Employers' Perspective
- Barriers from DPOs' Perspective

Barriers in Government Systems:

- **Job Quota Policies are not being implemented effectively** – Government has developed some policies for persons with disabilities like 10% quota for orphan and persons with disabilities at Blue Collar Government Jobs (third- and fourth-class employees). But these policies are not being implemented appropriately due to lack of awareness and proper support system for disable people. When we asked about 10% quota, we heard that this quota is often fulfilled by taking orphans only. As a result, disable people remain excluded from the workforce. Due to recent activism by students against Government job quotas, has been removed from 1st class jobs but the current Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina assured that though the government has abolished the quota system in first class public service, it is preparing a policy for persons with disabilities as well as ethnic and underprivileged groups so that they can easily get government jobs.³⁵ It is yet undeclared what that policy will ensure the rights of the Persons with Disability (PwD).

³⁵ <https://www.thedailystar.net/city/20th-national-day-of-persons-with-disabilities-policy-being-formulated-ensure-govt-jobs-special-people-1668526>

- Lack of Comprehensive Archive/Database for persons with disabilities**
 – If any organization or person wants to work for disability inclusion, they will face problems of getting accurate information as there is no comprehensive detailed database or archive for disable people in our country. As there is no database, disable people are hard to reach and they also don't know about the policies, trainings and facilities of the government that has been taken for them. There is one database developed by the Department of Social Service but that is also not easily accessible. The department feels that it needs to protect the identity of the PwDs, so is developing a policy for sharing the information. The database is also not being updated proactively; the Project Manager feels that due to the introduction of stipend, the PwD proactively tried to include themselves in the list to get the fund. She said it takes them about a week to get themselves registered in the list. Our discussions with the PwDs have revealed that it takes much longer to get enlisted and at times requires political backing to get enlisted. The database does not identify any information related to skills or education of the PwDs.
- Mr. Jahangir Alam, Director of Planning and Development, Department of Technical Education mentioned that “Less enrolment in primary education which is not allowing the PwD people to meet the minimum requirement for technical education.”
- Poor implementation of welfare initiatives of the Government:** Recently, government has started to provide Identity Card to persons with disabilities so that they can avail all social services. But again, it creates problems. Due to corruption, bureaucratic difficulties, persons with disabilities don't get the ID cards on time. They face many barriers while receiving the card. This card is supposed to give them access to specific number of seats for persons with disabilities at bus, train, steamer, etc. but it is not properly available to them.
 - Lack of Access to Technical and Vocational Training:** Mr. Jahangir Alam, Director of Planning and Development, Department of Technical Education mentioned that “Less enrolment in primary education which is not allowing the PwD people to meet the minimum requirement for technical education.” It is hampering their access to jobs. But he said, systematically it is difficult to reduce the bar of the minimum requirement of enrolment for technical education. We also heard from CDD, in the Government training centres the minimum level of education is very high and most of the Government training institutes are not accessible for PwDs and they don't have proper methodology to train a PwD.
 - Negative Perception:** A study titled, Disabled People's Access to Public

Sector Employment in Bangladesh³⁶ examines the causes why are persons with disabilities in Bangladesh not enjoying equal access to public sector employment in Bangladesh. The paper argues that Bangladesh could not ensure equal opportunity for Persons with Disability (PwD) in the public sector employment because of the negative perception of Bangladeshi elites towards disadvantaged and marginalized communities including Persons with Disability (PwD), lack of political commitment, negative attitude of community people, misunderstanding of employers about the capacity and skills of Persons with Disability (PwD) and absence of inclusive education, although the country adopted UN convention and enacted laws for creating equal opportunity in all aspects of life including employment.

- **Inadequate Social Safety Net for PwDs:** According to nine organizations working for persons with disabilities in Bangladesh, the allocations for Persons with Disability (PwD) is inadequate and limited only to the social safety net. They are still excluded from the development budgets of the government, with little to no investment in the creation of accessible environments in which they can function and flourish. According to the latest budget, the allocation for the Persons with Disability (PwD) is 2.19 percent of the budget for social safety nets, and only 0.31 percent of the total budget. Allowances make up a whopping 85.3 percent of the total allocation for the disabled. As per the latest budget, 15.45 lakh insolvent persons with disabilities are going to receive a monthly allowance of Tk 700, which was given to 10 lakh persons with disability previously. In addition, this year, the number of recipients of stipends for students with disability is going to be increased to one lakh from 90,000 and the rate of the stipends increased from Tk 700 to Tk 750 for primary students, from Tk 750 to Tk 800 for secondary students, and from Tk 850 to Tk 900 for higher secondary students. Disability rights organizations, however, point out that this allocation is simply not enough to cover the significant number of students with disability studying in different schools, colleges, and universities.³⁷
- **Lack of proper procedures:** This year in the National Budget, the Government has declared a Tax rebate 5% rebate on total tax introduced for taxpayers who employs physically challenged persons for at least 10% of the workforce. Centre for Policy Dialogue³⁸ has welcomed the move to promote inclusivity in the workforce. But there are doubts in the mind of the NGOs and DPOs working with PwDs, that this will be difficult to materialize and give proper benefit to PwDs.

³⁶ DISABLED PEOPLE'S ACCESS TO PUBLIC SECTOR EMPLOYMENT IN BANGLADESH: WHY SO LITTLE CHANGES? Md Abdul Jalil, Department of Social Work, Shahjalal University of Science and Technology, Sylhet-3114, Bangladesh; a Corresponding author: jalil_sust@yahoo.com

³⁷ <https://www.thedailystar.net/star-weekend/news/the-disabled-need-more-allowance-1759756>

³⁸ <https://cpd.org.bd/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/Presentation-on-CPD-Budget-Dialogue-FY-2019-20.pdf>

Barriers from Employers' Perspective

- **Lack of sector specific knowledge & skills** – NGOs are providing traditional training to persons with disabilities like adapting to workplace environment, but this is not enough as employers need skilled labour. For example – employers in a garments factory want to hire persons with disabilities. NGOs send some persons with disabilities who are skilled in producing garments handicrafts but not in machine operation. So, this type of labour is not useful for the employers. Employers are willing to work with skill development projects targeting poor people and if possible PwDs.
- **Lack of coordination between private and public sector** – Various initiatives are being taken by the government, but it is an established fact that government alone can never make the labour market fully disability inclusive. Government needs assistance of NGOs, DPOs and Private institutions. Recently, government has declared if private institutes hire persons with disabilities, then they will get 5% tax rebate. This is certainly a nice initiative but as there is no proper linkage or coordination between private and public sector, so the effectiveness of this initiative is still a question. Private sector organizations don't have detail information about this initiative. Without strong coordination, Private sector will not be able to make their organization policies disability inclusive. According to the CEO of BUILD, there needs to be a clear guideline to make this announcement work in favour of disability inclusion.
- **Lack of understanding of Reasonable Accommodation:** According to GIZ, organizations willing to hire PwDs, do not have the right working environment to allow them to work with ease. So, GIZ PSES programme has developed a checklist for auditing the factories which want to hire PwDs and according to the findings, they provide advice on what needs to change. Some employers have a wrong perception that reasonable accommodation is very expensive, which is not always true. But in cases of having to build new disable friendly toilet facility, has been difficult for some organizations.
- **Lack of understanding of Inclusive Jobs:** Inclusive employment refers to individuals with disabilities working alongside their peers without disabilities

Mr. Selim Rahman, Assistant Manager of CRP, he said "In general, the major change that I see in our society is that, may be ordinary people do not discriminate disable people verbally but they are not ready to provide the opportunity that a disable people deserve to get based on their merit. However, in rural area the scenario is not the same; so still we have to do a lot of work at village level."

in the competitive labour market (with access to the same benefits and career opportunities). But most of the employers' view PwDs needing exclusive low skill jobs than their peers and consider hiring them as CSR activity. As a result, a lot of PwDs feel discriminated in the organizations that hire them. At the same time, PwDs do not have clear career progression; they are usually left in the same job they joined many years ago, without any support from the management to upgrade their skills, even if the PwDs are willing or able. Due to this and many other reasons, PwDs often get a job but leave it feeling more frustrated than before.

- **Lack of Sharing of Best Practices:** Organizations who are successfully employing PwD sometime do not share their experience to turn into a business case (Keya). According to GIZ, including PwDs has proven to produce positive results for the organization, most of the time they work at par or higher than workers without disability. But when asked there was not business case to prove this point. In 2014, GIZ organized an award ceremony to recognize organizations who have done great work with Inclusion. That award ceremony was appreciated by a lot of stakeholder as a positive step to encourage disability inclusion.

DPO's point of view

- **Social stigma** - Social stigma regarding disability works like everlasting curse in a life of disable person. Still in our country ordinary people do not allow disable persons to integrate with their community. Disable people especially women are more vulnerable than men. They don't get permission to go outside for work. Still now, many families consider PwDs as burden. Though in urban areas, the situation is changing but in rural areas, the situation is still the same as before. While talking with Mr. Selim Rahman, Assistant Manager of CRP, he said "In general, the major change that I see in our society is that, may be ordinary people did not discriminate disable people verbally but they are not ready to provide the opportunity that a disable people deserve to get based on their merit. However, in rural area the scenario is not the same; so still we have to do a lot of work at village level." Family member of the PwDs still do not allow them to come out and join the labour force. Social stigma and disability unfriendly attitude are big challenges for inclusion initiative.
- **Lack of Access to Education & Training:** So many organizations are trying to provide training and education to the PwDs, but the biggest challenge is, those schools and training institutes are not accessible for disable people. Furthermore, to train a disable person sometimes training centres do not have the proper methodology and curriculum or trained teachers or trainers. In normal schools, and colleges, teachers, classmates of disable students are

not aware about this issue. They ignore the disable students, often insult them. As a result, the dropout rate of disable children is very high in our country.

- **Attitudinal Problem** – Mindset is the main barrier that PwDs face while going for a job. Mindset of employers is traditional. They assume that jobs are for physically fit people only. They don't want to hire disable people as they think that disable people are not the right fit for their jobs.
- **Restricted Mobility:** This is an important contributor to the exclusion of Persons with Disability (PwD) into mainstream development activities. The issue of accessibility for persons with disability in buildings and public transport is still not recognized. There are cases where a PwD unfriendly transportation, remain the vital cause for dropout from school and job places. Even after getting proper training and education many people with disability cannot access opportunities because of restricted mobility. Due to restricted mobility, job retention rate is very low among persons with disabilities.
- **Lack of decent workplace environment** – Though RMG factories have provided reasonable accommodation but other private organizations are still lagging to ensure a safe and decent workplace environment. Co-workers, security guards often misbehave with disable workers. Without proper policies, this situation will never change.
- **Informal Sector Jobs:** It was highlighted in the FGD that there are a lot of jobs being created in various sectors such as light engineering, agro-food processing, ICT free lancing etc. but these jobs are not formalized with the terms and conditions needed to identify them as formal jobs. These Small and Medium Enterprises (SME) are growing all over the country and as a result are in closer proximity to the PwDs, who can then access these jobs while staying at home. So, attention should be given so that the SME sector can become more responsible employers by maintaining the formalities of employment and the labour law of the country for their employees.

11. Module 8 – Conclusions and Recommendations

The history of inclusion of PwDs in formal sector is a very recent development in our country which is very encouraging for the people who are almost 10% of the population³⁹. Till date government sector is the largest formal job providers for the PwDs as there are certain quota for them and our government is willing to work on accelerating the inclusion of this segment of people in to the mainstream job market to uphold their dignity and create the opportunities for them to contribute to the national economy as a part of workforce.

It is evident from the KIIs and FGD with relevant stakeholder that most of the PwDs are either self-employed or engaged in informal sector and that causes inequality towards them and they are not treated with dignity. Mentionable changes have been made since the ratification of UNCRPD and the DPOs / CBOs and NGOs along with the state parties are trying to address the issue in a holistic approach. In Bangladesh, after some incident in different garments factories measures has been taken to incorporate the PwD of those incidents to accommodate them in the industries and the door has opened for the others PwDs too. Previously it was not believed that they can do certain job even if they were given favourable conditions.

It is highly appreciated from the employers' end that the PwDs who are working in the garments and leather industries mainly have shown high quality performance. From the experiences of the technical training institution Like UCEP, CDD, CRP it is highly appreciated by the employers. Project like GIZ PSES is working very closely with these sectors to make a clear difference in inclusive growth of these sectors. We have also received positive feedback from BGMEA regarding their experience with PwD as workers and they are willing to work with a project such as Inclusion Works.

The currently employed PwDs are also happy to be the part of formal job sector and they are willing to establish a good track record for their community; so that the future job market and the employers will be more responsive towards them. Some organizations like Keya Group appear to have developed a very good system of recruiting, training and retaining PwDs in their factories, but unfortunately, they are not very willing to share their best practices. The experiences or the successful retention of the employees at formal sector also creates hope for the future and certainly will benefits both parties.

It is found from the rapid assessment that, though the process of inclusion in formal private sector has started but yet to develop a culture of inclusion where the disabled would be able to gather proper knowledge and skills and will be able to

³⁹ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Disability_in_Bangladesh

enter into formal market through competitive process. Awareness and technical knowledge at both ends can accelerate the process. It is also suggested that RMG, leather industries, ICT, light engineering, automobile engineering, agro-food processing, hospitality and tourism sectors etc. would have the chance to flourish for both local and international demand and markets. So, it is the high time to find out necessary skills and accommodate persons with disabilities in in those sectors, working closely with them.

The government is willing and working on establishing 100 economic zones all over the country and that also poses opportunities for the formal sector jobs for all poor people in the regions by the decentralization process of establishing these economic zones. This offers a great opportunity for PwDs as it is highly desired that they live close to their original homes and their families to get their continued support. But there needs to be lobbying on behalf of the PwDs, to make these economic zones accessible for all types of people and make the organizations inclusive from the beginning of their design, rather than as a remodelling approach.

The experiences that are found in the rapid assessment that qualified persons are not available for fill up quota in government sector and technical institutions are far behind of enrolment for PwDs and that hinder the process of having skilful persons. It is a vicious cycle which is leaving the PwDs without any option for improving their lives, and they are helpless and frustrated to say the least. At times their families (especially parents) are also feeling helpless and agitated with the system, and they do not know what will happen to their children with disabilities once they are gone.

There are lots of issues that came out in the rapid assessment. The respondents also focused on how we can overcome the current situation and establish the dignified job opportunities for the PwDs in formal sector. Below are some of the suggestions from various stakeholders:

- First, we need to create awareness among the family and the community members; so that the PwDs can have access to education and other socialization process to build themselves as capable workforce in line with contemporary needs. Currently the society treats PwDs in the notion of charity; it should be transformed into a dignified mode to support them in gaining meaningful employment.
- Department of Social Services (DSS) has the information of PwDs all over the country, but their skills and abilities should be considered in that database, so that interested stakeholders can use that information for developing the wellbeing of PwDs; keeping their dignity intact.
- General education and technical education curriculum and teaching methods

should be inclusive; we need to invest on different software and other devices so that we will be able to ensure everyone's need.

- Clarity regarding quota and other facilities is needed for wider understanding and should be the part of policy and legislation.
- We need to develop a culture of acknowledging or understating the differently able people and create space for them to prove their ability and integrity towards gaining meaningful income opportunities or formal jobs.
- The formal sector is flourishing in our country mainly through private initiative and having supports from government institutions. So, there should be synchronized efforts from public-private partnership for better addressing the issues of job placements for PwDs.
- The DPOs should be given more capacities and priorities to disseminate information to the PwDs and their families about their entitlements and the scope of education, training and job placements. It is highly recommended that job specific training and database for the PwDs should be available with DPOs and the DSS. The DPOs can be the missing link we have found through various discussions.
- It has become known that most of the education and training providing institutions are focusing on mild and moderate disabilities, but the other forms of severe disability should be taken care of so that they can also access necessary education and skills. There should be more inclusive job centres for the PwDs which can ensure their access to meaningful employment.
- In order to strive towards an accessible and barrier free society; we need to understand and acknowledge the needs of every individuals and initiate the change process right from our family to our day-to-day activities in the community. When we will be able to realize the needs of an accessible and barrier free workplace and transportation system then things will be easier for all PwDs to lead a dignified life.
- It is highly acknowledged that some of the PwDs need special care and they will not be able to contribute in formal sectors or many other occupations due to their physical or mental barriers; but for this reason the most number of PwDs who are capable of doing certain thing should not be left out or considered as non-productive. We must carry out our social services but also open new opportunities and techniques to incorporate the large number of PwDs as workforce and give them and the new generation a chance to develop their skills to lead a dignified life.
- Evidence based advocacy should be in place to create awareness amongst the employers and the employees, that PwDs are also very productive workers / employees and given the opportunity, they too can contribute positively to our society.
- It is also recommended that the state party will act according to the UNCPRD and take necessary steps under SDG implementation process for the dignified

life of PwDS and to eliminate poverty that is prevalent; especially in this segment of the population.

- It is evident from the rapid analysis that stakeholders related to this issues are willing and working for a solution or way forward towards an inclusive society and this is just the beginning; so the actors including government bodies, private sectors, NGOs, donors and DPOs needs to come to a common platform and make the things happen in a holistic manner to improve the lives of the PwDs.

11.1 Recommendations: RMG sector

The following recommendations may facilitate and improve gap filling of skill requirement:

- The vocational education on RMG and Textile with different specialization in Denim, merchandising, Mechanical and Apparels should be made available.
- The Curriculum must be improvised considering the global standards focusing the Industry and Market development.
- Share and embed global curriculum into our curriculum to enhance professional potential of vocational students with employment potential.
- Universities offering Fashion technology and Textile Engineering are required to align and streamline their programme with RMG Industry.
- Prioritizing local University graduates in the Job market especially in RMG Industrial vacancies, positions.
- Providing on-job skill development training focused group coaching for all semi and unskilled workforce for efficiency development.
- A nationwide agreement for building a skill development Council with all stakeholders' participations- Industry, retailer, manufacturer, Government and Academicians is to be established.

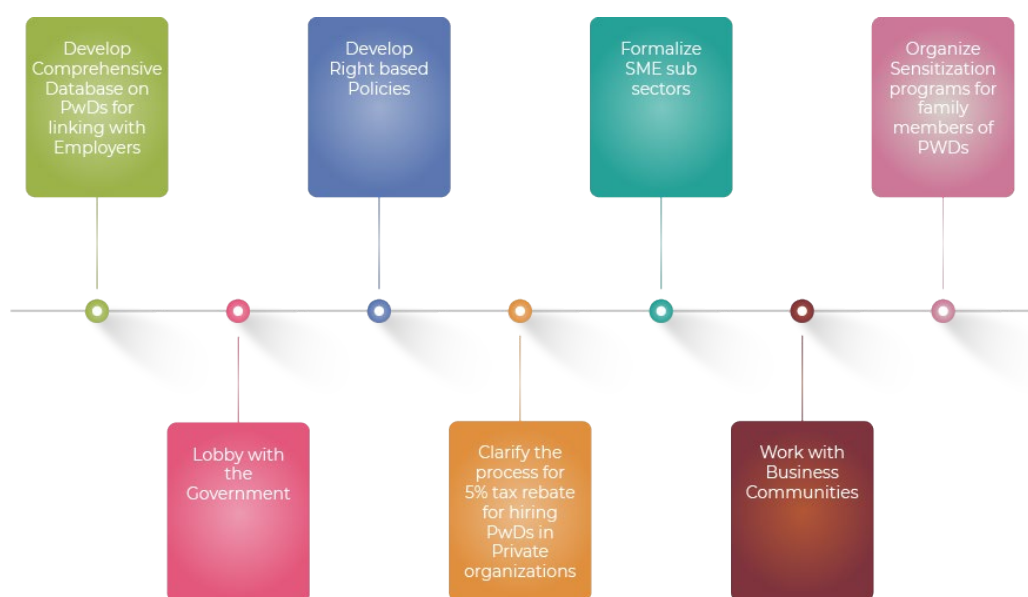
11.2 Specific Recommendations for Inclusion Works

- **Comprehensive Database on PwDs for linking with Employers** – After conducting secondary review and interviews with relevant stakeholders, we have observed that both government and private sector employees have no clear idea about the total number of PwDs in Bangladesh. The database maintained by Ministry of Social Welfare only identifies PwDs and their types of disability, but they have no knowledge about the skills and capacities of the listed PwDs. If employers want to recruit PwDs, they don't

know from where they should look for to find qualified candidates. In developed countries, government maintains a database from where people get all required information about PwDs. We suggest that Inclusion Works starts to create a comprehensive Database where all types of information – nature and type of disability, prevalence of disable people based on geographical location, skills and training received for listed people, any other relevant information and their CVs in a searchable format. The main objectives of creating a Database are:

- a. Identification of PwDs looking for work
- b. Awareness raising on relevant stakeholders
- c. Awareness about jobs for PwDs through jobs posting by employers
- d. Help in Policy making for PwDs
- e. Getting access to all types of information services – such as health, social, educational, training facilities and various other relevant services for PwDs.

This database will help both parties – Employers and PwDs (through their families). Employers will get to know in which area PwDs are living and PwDs will get information about all the national policies, actions of the Government, job vacancies and other relevant information. However, any type of database requires constant up-gradation and maintenance. So, in this case our suggestion is to enable the DPOs to maintain and update the Database with new information. But for doing that, capacity building of DPOs is mandatory. Inclusion works programme can provide capacity building training to DPOs and NGOs working with PwDs in this case.



- **Lobbying with the Government** – Government has significant rules, regulations and policies for PwDs, but these policies are not being implemented by them effectively. They should create an enabling environment for disability inclusion in workforce; first, by meeting their own quota targets. So, we suggest that Inclusion Works programme should discuss with government to implement the policies more effectively. If they do this, then they can demonstrate their good will and motivate private sector to hire more PwDs. We know that Government alone can never make all the necessary changes happen, but at least they can initiate the changes. It should be an integrated approach where all relevant stakeholders – Private sector, NGO, DPOs will work together, and Inclusion Works can help to stimulate the multi-stakeholder platform.
- **Policies should be rights based, not charity based** – Government should develop policies that proclaim the rights of PwDs as citizens. It should not portray that they are doing a favour for PwDs by providing them with stipends and other services. With the focus on SDGs, Inclusion Works can highlight the issues of Rights Based Approach to Disability Inclusion for services and jobs, rather than CSR or charity mindset. If this is not taken up as an active agenda, our country will always consider working for PwDs as charitable work and they will never get their dignity as humans.
- **Clarify the process for 5% tax rebate for hiring PwDs in Private organizations** – Government has declared a 5% tax rebate in the last budget if the private sector companies hire 10% employees with disabilities. We have not found much enthusiasm from the various organizations who work with disability inclusion regarding this declaration. So, we believe that Inclusion Works can advocate with the government to ensure that this declaration is transformed into a legitimate process, so that private sector companies can get this tax rebate and can hire 10% employees with the right skills for their organizations.
- **Formalize SME sub sectors** – In Bangladesh, most informal SME sub sectors are growing like Agro food processing and Light engineering. These sectors have huge potential for employment generation all over Bangladesh. PwDs can also join in these sectors, with fewer barriers as they are usually nearer to their homes. Jobs in formal sectors usually means the locations are near urban communities and accessing those jobs are not easy for PwDs as they face several barriers like mobility problem, lack of security, lack of reasonable accommodation, etc. As a result, they cannot join in these potential sectors. If Inclusion Works can help to build the capacity of SMEs to become more formal, then it will create meaningful job opportunities for PwDs. Besides these sectors, there are some other

sectors like Agent banking, mobile banking - which also require skilled employees in the regional and rural areas. Inclusion Works should focus on these sectors to make the PwDs have access to skills development initiatives so that they can apply for those jobs.

- **Working with Business Communities** – We have come to realize that organizations who are trying to hire PwDs, are not always successful as there are systemic barriers which are preventing them from finding, hiring and retaining PwDs in their organizations. We suggest that Inclusion Works develops partnership with organizations such as BBDN, BGMEA, Women’s Chamber etc. who are willing to employ PwDs in their member organizations and support them in the best possible way by linking them with DPOs and NGOs working for disability inclusion. A comprehensive training on disability inclusive job analysis should be provided to all HR professional of organizations through BBDN, who is based in Bangladesh Employers Federation, the apex body of all employers in Bangladesh. After receiving the training, recruiters will determine which types of jobs are suitable for PwDs and then they can hire persons with disabilities based on their skills.
- **Sensitization programs for family members of persons with disabilities** - The first barrier that PwDs face is from their families. We have come to realize that, families don’t allow PwDs to go for jobs, or even try to access education or training in the fear of social stigma or harassment. So, in this case, sensitization / creating awareness is necessary, first and foremost for the parents of the PwDs. Families should understand that disable can also become important asset for their families and the country. At times, they do not even know how to handle their child, how to develop their life skills and how to help their children with disabilities to get educated or trained. Without creating awareness of family members, all other policies, quota system will go in vain. We are suggesting Inclusion Works can develop information materials for parents of children with disabilities, so that they can guide their children properly and help them to develop necessary skills to get jobs.
- **Making economic zones disability inclusive** – Recently Government as declared 100 economic zones which are creating large number of jobs for people. If Government can make these zones accessible for PwDs from the very beginning, then it will open opportunities for PwDs in large scale in sectors that will be establishing their businesses in those zones. Inclusion Works can partner with BEZA Authorities in helping them to keep this inclusion agenda in mind and help organizations to also avail the 5% tax rebate from the very on-set of their business.

- **Enhancing the Role of DPOs** – Disabled Peoples’ Organizations need capacity building and funding support to create an enabling environment for the PwDs with a life cycle approach. There are many barriers for a child who is diagnosed with disability and as our society is not inclusive, the chances of the child to get access to health care, get enrolled in the government social safety net, get access to education, training, advice and counselling for getting jobs etc. are all very unstructured and fragmented. Inclusion Works can help build the capacity of the DPOs to provide a comprehensive life cycle-based support to the PwDs within their jurisdiction, so that the chances of the PwDs to access various public and private services increase and they can lead a more dignified life.