

## CHAPTER XI

# *Summary and Conclusions*

### **11.1. Summary**

Children are the most vulnerable resource of the world and also the future of mankind. They should be fostered properly on the basis of internationally recognized child rights (i.e., UN CRC) for their proper development. But in most of the developing countries like Bangladesh, where children are almost half of the total population, a large number of children are living a vulnerable life. They are widely defrauded from their basic rights. Among them, working children are the largest group throughout the world.

The **First Chapter** of the thesis is the Introduction and deals with the background of the problem of child labour in Bangladesh as well as a description of all the major educational and skill training interventions for the working children of the major urban areas in Bangladesh i.e., in Dhaka, Chittagong, Khulna and Rajshahi city areas during the decade of the 1990s. The specific objectives of our study were: (a) to find out the real picture of education and skill training interventions of different bodies for the urban working children in Bangladesh during the 1990s; (b) to ascertain the basic nature of those organizations which are serving the specific fields; (c) to assess the quality and effectiveness of education and skill training services provided by the different bodies and their action projects to the urban working children; (d) to assess the impact of those interventions on the daily lives of the urban working children; (e) to take a comparative assessment of the successes and facilities of different bodies' education and skill training interventions with respect to the results that they achieved during the 1990s; and (f) to recommend suggestions for the effective education and skill training interventions on the urban working children in Bangladesh as well in other developing countries.

The first chapter also deals with the 'methodology' of the study. The study was basically based on secondary data. Various published and unpublished

literatures such as assessment and evaluation reports, annual reports, mid-term review reports, periodicals, research-based publications, manuals, directories, handouts, articles, etc. published by different bodies regarding child labour interventions were the basic sources of data that were used in the study. These literatures have been collected directly from the respective authorities or/and their apex bodies or indirectly from different libraries of those four major cities of Bangladesh. Data processing and analysis techniques have also been discussed in this chapter. Lastly, the chapter ended with the chapterization of the thesis.

The **Second Chapter** provides an overview on Bangladesh. It includes general topographical and multidimensional socio-economic and cultural issues of the country, which are the base and background of the child labour problem. To this end, it briefly discusses the 'geographical position', 'historical background', 'socio-cultural characteristics' and the 'population and gender issues' of the country. The chapter also briefly analyzes the state and characteristics of the 'national economy' with special emphasis on the 'poverty issues'. Then it takes the issue of 'urbanization and urban dimensions' of the country. It shows that though Bangladesh is a rural-based country, the urbanization process became stronger during the 1980s and the 1990s. This rapid urbanization is not an outcome of industrialization or real urban development. There are many 'push' and 'pull' factors behind it.

There are many problems in urban areas, like over-population, unplanned physical growth, lack of proper housing, non-availability of safe drinking water and other basic facilities, polluted environment, criminal activities, etc., but probably the main problem is the widespread urban poverty. The absolute number of the urban poor and the hard-core poor is increasing over the years. Children of those poor urban families are the main victims.

The chapter lastly draws a brief scenario of the four metropolitan cities i.e., Dhaka, Chittagong, Khulna and Rajshahi – which are the specific areas of this study. It also provides the topographical and demographical description of those cities pointing to the vulnerable situation of the urban poor and the slum dwellers.

The **Third Chapter** deals with the problem of child labour and the issues of child rights and child development in Bangladesh and also the conceptual

definitions of some related terms i.e., the child, child labour, child work, etc. on the basis of international and Bangladeshi contexts. It then explores the nature, extent and magnitude of the child labour problem in Bangladesh and shows the major forms of child labour in Bangladesh. It also examines the causes of child labour in Bangladesh and shows that the problem has arisen from the 'Vicious Circle' centred to unplanned and rapid urbanization, mass poverty and rapid growth of population, specially among the poor. There are many 'push' factors e.g. economic hardship, unemployment, natural disasters, etc. and also 'pull' factors e.g. more opportunity to get work in the urban areas.

This chapter has also explored the rights of children in Bangladesh with special reference to the UN CRC of 1990. It showed that the basic rights of children and the duties of the state towards them are enshrined in the Constitution of the country, mainly by Article 17 and partly by Articles 11, 14, 15, 18, 31 and 34. Some legal provisions like the promulgation of the Bangladesh Sishu Academy Ordinance have also been made. The constitutional and legal provisions, however, have not covered all the child rights declared in the CRC. The chapter also discusses the vulnerable livelihood and legal rights of the working children in Bangladesh.

The Chapter also has explored the 'child development' issues in Bangladesh with an assessment of the related Government policies and activities with special reference to the National Plan of Action (NPA) for children for the periods of 1990-95 and 1997-2002, National Policy on Children (NPC) 1994, Bangladesh Decade Action Plan for the Girl Child 1991-2000, and the National Children Council (NCC). The issue of child development in the five-year plans and the trends of progress in child development indicators of the country during the 1990s were also been discussed in this chapter.

The **Fourth Chapter** deals with the critical issues of urban child labour problem exploring its major forms, harms and hazards. It also explores the importance and effectiveness of education and skill training interventions as the key strategy to combat the problem. By its nature, the urban child labour is different from and much more harmful in comparison to the rural child labour. Most of the available jobs in the urban areas are informal, ill-paid and with long duration. Most

of the hazardous jobs are also concentrated in the major urban areas. Domestic services, selling various goods and services, prostitution, waste collection, serving in the transport and communication, etc. are the main occupations of the urban working children in Bangladesh.

As it was found, about half of the urban working children never attended school and another 43 per cent attended school in the past but failed to continue. Usually they do not have enough time to take part in recreational activities. It was also found that the urban working children of Bangladesh, irrespective of their gender and occupation, are generally the victims of abuse, exploitation and violence. Street children are the most common victims. There are serious risks and harms in some occupations e.g. in domestic work; scavenging and rag picking; street trades/sales; work in a workshop or welding shop; construction work; glass, match, tannery and weaving factory works; etc. All these works are dangerous for the physical, cognitive, emotional, psychological and social development of these vulnerable children.

The chapter lastly raised the question of solution of the child labour problem and showed that withdrawal from work is not the effective solution in the context of Bangladesh. Rather, the specialized short-termed non-formal education and need-based marketable technical skill training are strategically the time-tested and effective methods to combat the problem.

The **Fifth Chapter** evaluates the policy, plans, and strategies of the GOB on education and skill training services for the urban working children in Bangladesh. The CEDC programme of MOSW was the first GOB response to the urban disadvantaged children including their families. This 3-year pilot project was started in 1994-95 in Dhaka, Chittagong, Khulna, Rajshahi and Narayanganj cities with the financial help of the UNDP. It was completed in 1997-98 and covered a total of 29,532 beneficiaries. Most of them were working children. It emphasized the non-formal functional education and skill training interventions amongst its programme components. It covered 12-15 years old slum, street and working children by its minimum literacy programme. The shelterless working/street girls were also covered in the programme with shelters in 'Girls' Hostels' and other facilities.

Though it was a small project, the GOB achieved some experience and expertise from this project regarding child labour intervention.

The second and the largest GOB initiative in this regard was the BEHTRUC project which was launched by the DNFE in October 1997 and was jointly funded by the GOB, SIDA (Sweden) and the UNICEF. It had a provision to provide NFE to 0.351 million urban underprivileged children aged 8-14 years in all six divisional cities of the country. The BEHTRUC project had a lot of limitations like slow, weak and defective service delivery system; inadequate follow-up system; poor community and social mobilization; lack of effective monitoring; etc. The absence of skill training facilities was one of the major limitations of this project. As the biggest action programme it, however, created greater consciousness and responsibilities among different parties with respect to child labour interventions. It also established a greater networking relationship among several bodies.

The third and last (in the 1990s) project of the GOB was the ARISE, officially started in late 1998 by the DSS of MOSW with the financial assistance of the UNDP. The 3-year project viewed to support about 30,000 street children in the six divisional cities through 9 partner NGOs. The primary objective was to help the street children by strengthening their survival skills and providing opportunities and appropriate environments for a productive future. The major service components were: half-way shelter home/drop-in-centre, non-formal education, healthcare, vocational training, job placement, legal aid protection, etc.

The chapter lastly assessed the impact achieved by the GOB interventions to combat the child labour problem and found that a total of about 2 lac urban street, slum and working children and some of their families were directly benefited within the last 10 years. Non-formal education was the most common programme, though skill training also covered a few children including job placement and self-employment support services. But still the GOB had some major limitations like lack of proper policy; lack of a proper physical environment; lack of an effective selection method of the NGO partners; lack of proper coordination and monitoring of services; lack of appropriate teaching-learning methods; absence of appropriate and well-organized skill training facilities; lack of effective linkage among all related parties/bodies even among the GOB departments, etc.

The **Sixth Chapter** discussed and assessed the NGO interventions on this issue. There were about 100 NGOs who were involved in the child right issues in Bangladesh during the late 1990s and most of them were located in the major urban areas. Education was the most common service offered by more than 90 per cent of those NGOs. Other common areas were awareness raising (56%), technical/vocational skill training (33%), healthcare services (29%), etc.

*In case of NFE*, some larger NGOs developed their programmes specially in Dhaka and in some other big cities for working children. Some of them (e.g. ASK, BRAC, SEEP, Shoishab, etc.) usually covered only upto grade II or III in their NFE centres; while others e.g. AB, Proshika, Surovi, UCEP, etc. covered upto grade V to VIII. Most of them followed a shortened period of school hours (2 to 3 hours) and course duration (6 to 9 months for each grade) having a specially developed NFE curriculum. Some 150 NGOs were also involved in the GOB's HTR project to provide NFE upto grade III in the six divisional cities since 1997.

Under the MOU project for the under-aged ex-child workers (below 14) of the garment industry since 1996, two experienced NGOs i.e., the BRAC and the GSS took the responsibility to provide NFE and upto March 2000, a total of 9,780 such children were enrolled in 353 MOU schools of BRAC and GSS mainly in Dhaka and Chittagong cities. Students of those schools were provided lessons according to the need and capability of them. In the ARISE project of DSS, on the other hand, 9 NGOs – 4 in Dhaka and 1 each in 5 other divisional cities – were involved from 1999 to provide NFE among the street-based working children of six divisional cities.

Comparatively a smaller number of NGOs were involved in the service of *technical and vocational skill training*. About 20 to 22 NGOs were found to be working during the 1990s with skill training interventions and most of them (82%) were working only in Dhaka city. Presently, only a very few (e.g. the UCEP) have such programmes in 2, 3 or 4 cities including Dhaka commonly. Only a few NGOs have such interventions as a regular programme component e.g. AB, Surovi and UCEP. In these NGOs, after NFE, there have been provisions for some selected students to get short-term pre-skilled or vocational skill training in several trades e.g. tailoring, embroidery, doll making, candle making, signboard/banner writing, wood

carving, etc. Most of them are for a term of 6 months. Only in UCEP, there are some quality vocational training facilities for its general school graduates with duration of 6 months to 2 years.

The chapter assessed the impact of NGO-interventions on education and skill training for working children and found that a large number of working children in urban areas were directly benefited in the four metro cities. Families of the children were also benefited from NGO interventions through consciousness rising on the necessity of education, healthcare and hygiene, etc. They were also benefited by financial assistance either by the working children or by the NGOs through credit schemes, or even by both of them. Through such NGO interventions, respective communities including families, employers and local leaders were indirectly also benefited. Achievement of better gender balance and improvement in the child right situation among the girls were the two other important social impacts of the NGO interventions. In the successive process of NGO interventions, networking and collaboration has become an important working strategy. The prevention of early marriage/motherhood and parenthood was the other important achievement of those NGO interventions.

Nevertheless, the majority of the NGOs had some constraints, weaknesses and limitations. Some NGOs were providing uncoordinated, inadequate and defective services; some were not serious in selection of targeted students and qualified teachers/instructors, nor had they the provision of adequate training facilities for teachers/instructors. Other limitations were: absence of equivalence of standards; use of different materials by different NGOs; lack of effective and attractive need-based curriculum; absence of adequate skill training facilities, etc.

The **Seventh Chapter** has examined and assessed the role and response of the UN agencies, INGOs, Donors and the BGMEA. Most of them started their functions in various socio-economic fields in Bangladesh since the early 1970s. Many of them, specially the two UN bodies, the UNICEF and the ILO, were treated internationally as the dedicated child rights and child development authorities. The UNICEF adopted a broad policy in 1986 for the first time for the total abolition of all forms of child labour. The IPEC of ILO is the world's largest technical cooperation programme on child labour elimination process. Since its

inception in 1992, the IPEC has been working in Bangladesh. From the business sector, the BGMEA has also involved itself in this field through the multi-party joint MOU project since 1994-95, as a consequence of the Harkin Bill of the US Congress.

The *UNICEF* has been playing a very important and leading role in Bangladesh in the field of child labour intervention. It became a strategic partner and fund provider of the GOB in the CEDC programme in the early 1990s. It was a major signatory, fund provider and technical assistance provider in the MOU project for both education and skill training for the removed child labourers of the garment industry since 1995. In the HTR project, the UNICEF expanded its role as the mediator, partner, and the largest investor with the GOB. Till date this project is the major response of the UNICEF for urban working children in Bangladesh.

The major strategies that are followed by the *ILO-IPEC* are: situation assessment, withdrawal of children from hazardous works with alternative provisions, institutional development and capacity building of the GOB departments and other organizations, providing appropriate NFE, skill training and safety training to the child workers, awareness raising, advocacy, networking with all possible partners, etc. The IPEC has carried out several research works on the situation assessment jointly with the GOB and others.

The major individual action programmes of *ILO-IPEC* in Bangladesh covered almost all its strategic areas. It played a very important role as one of the signatories and partners in the MOU project. Upto the middle of 2000, a total of 50,000 working children were directly benefited by about 100 action programmes of the *ILO-IPEC* both in urban and rural areas – and 77 per cent of them were implemented in the 4 metropolitan cities.

Another UN agency, the UNDP, was also deeply involved in the *ARISE* project of the DSS (of GOB) to provide non-formal education, skill training, shelter, medicare and other package services to the street children of the major urban areas of Bangladesh.

Action-Aid Bangladesh, “*Enfants Du Monde*”, Red Barnet, Rädde Barnen and other INGOs and the international donor countries/agencies are also playing very important roles mainly through fund supply and partly through collaboration,

cooperation and strategic advocacy in the child labour elimination projects. During the last years of the 1990s, there were 13 different INGOs who were providing financial and technical supports to about 23 NGOs providing their own child labour interventions like NFE, skill training, healthcare, shelter, etc. About 15 major donor agencies/countries were supporting about 19 such NGOs mainly through fund supply. DFID of UK and Swiss SIDA were providing financial support to the biggest child labour-related project of the country, which is the HTR project. The German Government was also supplying funds for the IPEC programme in Bangladesh. The US Department of Labour was supporting the MOU project through providing funds and technical assistance.

Being a business organization, the involvement of BGMEA created a unique example. BGMEA accepted its responsibility and signed the MOU with UNICEF and ILO in 1995. It was involved in the survey programme, education programme and monitoring process and provided US \$ 50,000 annually for schooling. It also helped the 'family support', 'earn and learn', 'continuing education' and other components of the MOU project. It employed 741 fourteen-plus MOU students in garment factories till May, 2001. As an individual project, the MOU project was the most realistic response against the negative consequences of the Harkin Bill of the US Congress among the poor urban working children (mostly girls) in Bangladesh.

Lastly, this chapter also assessed the networking and collaboration of UN bodies, INGOs, Donors and the BGMEA for their programme of intervention to the urban working children in Bangladesh.

The **Eighth Chapter** shows, as a national NGO, how UCEP has been providing the poor underprivileged working children in the four metro cities of Bangladesh with the opportunities to acquire free schooling as well as vocational and pre-vocational skill training with job placement support. The target group of the UCEP consisted of 10+ aged street and working children, and adolescents of very poor families living in urban slums and squatter settlements.

The UCEP has a well-organized and effective organizational set-up with its dynamic and transparent character. "UCEP Association" is the supreme body, interacting with the UCEP management through the "Board of Governors". These two bodies usually take active interest in finalizing strategic issues and plans. The

overall activities are implemented by a simple line of management starting from the Executive Director down to the Unit/School Administrators. The major strategies followed by the UCEP are: special type of basic education for working children in different shifts; learning with earning; shortened school-hour and school-year; employable and need-based vocational training; community participation and involvement; linkage between basic education, vocational training and employment support – which is the key strategy; networking with industry, business and employers, and other organizations; adequate staff training and well-designed supervisory system; social work supports for the students; etc. – all of which are the inherent power of success of the organization.

There are four programme components in the UCEP covering all the four metro cities. The *General Education (GE)* component has a four and a half-year cycle of primary and lower secondary education system providing non-formal basic education from preparatory I to grade VIII. Children can attend the schools in one of three shifts, which is convenient to them without having any adverse effect on their earning. The special type of learning curriculum is designed so as to ensure that the students do not require any home reading.

*Vocational Education (VE)* is the second component which starts after successful completion of the GE. GE graduates may bifurcate into two different routes of VE available, either in Technical Schools (TSs) or in the Para-Trade-Training Centres (PTTCs). TSs is offering 'hand-on' vocational training in about 15 trade courses. The course duration varies from 6 months to 2 years. All the courses are oriented to the needs of the local labour market. The PTTC is the second option which is an innovative and cost-effective vocational training intervention that allows urban working children to acquire basic skill in simple trades in a very short span of time i.e., 6 months. Like the TSs, each of the PTTCs runs two shifts a day.

*Employment and Field Service (EFS)* is the third project component in the UCEP. The EFS arranges on-the-job (OTJ) training and job placement for its graduates. Modus operandi of EFS include: labour market survey, linkage with employers, observance of employers' day, organization of job hunting days/weeks, follow-up visits to the employers and graduates, etc.

The fourth and the last component is the *Human Resource Development (HRD)* with the provision of adequate staff training. It starts with an orientation training immediately after recruitment. In addition to pedagogy, the teachers are given training on the issues of life situation of the working children, application of social work techniques in overcoming learning limitations, alternative approaches to education suitable for the working children, techniques of monitoring and evaluation of the progress of learning, use of teaching materials, etc.

The **Ninth Chapter** provides an in-depth assessment on the progress and success of the UCEP interventions during the 1990s. About 66,000 children graduated from the UCEP during this period from GE and VE. This group would have remained trapped in illiteracy throughout their life. They received education even upto grade VIII and skill training without any loss of their income. They were also benefited by the better status of their new occupation as most of them were involved in semi-skilled or skilled types of job functions. Their incomes also increased significantly. UCEP graduates were also provided with some important life skills by which they were benefited in their personal, familial and professional life.

The families of those children were also benefited through (a) increased rate of financial contribution by the graduates; (b) better housing and living standard; (c) low physical mobilities of families; (d) achieving some positive changes e.g. more consciousness on education and healthcare, more respects to women, more importance on girl child, etc. in the family; (e) more consciousness on using safe drinking water, safe defecation place and family planning issues; and (f) enjoying more respect in the community, etc. The communities and the employers of those working children were also benefited through UCEP interventions in many terms.

The wide experience and high success of the UCEP influenced other organizations to undertake similar types of programmes for street and working children in the urban areas. This model also influenced the related GOB policies. The international community has also been impressed by the UCEP model and the replication of it in Nepal and Indonesia started during the 1990s. Strong institutional and social sustainability of the UCEP are the two important considerations in favour of its replication in the international arena. The HRD

component of the UCEP has also played a significant role to develop human resources of the country. As recognition of its achievement, the ESCAP bestowed the 'UN ESCAP HRD Runner-up Award' on the UCEP twice, in 1995 and 1997.

The **Tenth Chapter** has been devoted to assess the major similarities and dissimilarities among the different bodies in their education and skill training interventions to the urban working children in Bangladesh, though to draw a good sensible comparison is very difficult because practically all the bodies were not in a similar position in terms of the area of services, coverage, and involvement periods. The involvement of several parties in a single project (e.g. in HTR) is the other limitation to comparison. Nevertheless, some important issues and events have been compared.

Non-formal education was the most common component in all projects of all the bodies. Most of the projects followed a *gender balance* among their NFE students and the larger NGOs were specially more successful in this area. The larger NGOs (including the UCEP) were also found to be very good in terms of high *retention rate* (about 95%), low *dropout rate* (4 to 5%) and high *attendance rate* (90%+) during the late 1990s. In the GOB projects and small NGO's interventions on the other hand, all these rates were not so favourable.

Regarding the *teaching method and school environment*, there was a lot of differences among the different bodies. Almost all the bodies and their projects (e.g. the HTR and MOU projects) were found to follow the centre-based non-formal education system while the ARISE project followed more informal and mobile/open-air street-school system. The school hours and grade duration were not fixed there. Even the large NGOs followed different systems. Only the UCEP developed a life-oriented, need-based and effective curriculum of NFE combining the national standard primary and lower secondary curriculum for the urban underprivileged children.

In terms of *student's achievements* in school, UCEP's position was the topmost where more than 97 per cent of students became successful in the standard examination system. On the other hand, the rate of success was only 54 per cent in the HTR project, and about 80 to 90 per cent in the large NGO's NFE projects. One of the main causes behind the high performance and achievements in the

UCEP was the higher qualified teachers' recruitment followed by quality service-related training and higher salary structure. But all these factors were found to be poor and below standard in all other projects specially in the GOB projects.

In terms of *follow-up and home-visit* approach and social work support service in the school system – again the UCEP was the pioneer and was in the best position among all the projects during the 1990s. These factors were found to be neglected in different projects in a more practical sense. In terms of *involvement of related families, communities and employers* in the school system, only a few larger NGOs were comparatively conscious and in better positions than the small NGOs and the GOB's projects.

The *average cost per student* among the prominent NGOs in this field during the mid-1990s was about Tk. 483, whereas in the HTR project this was about Tk. 618 in the late 1990s. These were much better in comparison with the higher expenditure of Government primary schools (Tk. 1,923 as found in 1999). In the UCEP, though the cost was comparatively higher (Tk. 644 as in mid-1990s), it was totally justified with the consideration of its integrated approach, quality education, adequate teachers' training and high salary structure as well as very good achievements.

*Skill training intervention*, on the other hand, was not so common like NFE. Only a very few NGOs had regular programmes and, except the UCEP, their coverage of trades and students were very small. There was no provision of skill training intervention in the HTR project. Even the ARISE projects' skill training facilities were not so strong, rather these were haphazard and neglected in many ways. In the MOU project, though the skill training component was added by the UNICEF, the coverage was very limited in comparison with the NFE coverage. Again, excepting the UCEP, there were no quality vocational training facilities for working children during the 1990s. Even in the UCEP programme, vocational skill training facilities covered comparatively a limited number of GE students. However, in terms of number of training trades, quality of training and linkage with employment facilities, the UCEP was found to be much more advanced and in the right track than the other NGOs which had similar programmes.

It was found that *networking and collaboration* was the common phenomenon for all related bodies involved in child labour interventions during the 1990s as it has been treated as an indispensable working strategy. But again, the larger NGOs were found to be very successful in this matter with their better capacity and scope to do so. The GOB was not so strong in this field. In case of the UN bodies, this was an important and integral part of their working strategy.

In terms of *organizational development, capacity building, supervision and monitoring, research and evaluation*, etc. only some NGOs and the ILO-IPEC were in a strong position. Neither the GOB departments nor the majority of the NGOs were in a strong position in this respect. There was a lot of scope and capacity of the GOB in this regard but these were not found to be utilised seriously in the GOB projects.

For the GOB, the approach and strategies are still in a developing stage. Education, skill training, shelter, medicare, etc. are being followed by the GOB only in the recent years on a pilot basis. The UN agencies, specially the ILO-IPEC, developed a comparatively strong and effective multi-dimensional approach and strategy. Almost all possible strategic approaches have been covered combinedly by different NGOs. Some of the leading NGOs e.g. UCEP, AB, etc. developed a well-coordinated and integrated multidimensional effective approach. The approaches of the INGOs and donors were limited in fund providing for action programmes, programme evaluation, collaboration, etc. – but these were also very important.

## **11.2. Conclusions:**

After the assessment of different bodies' interventions to combat the problem of urban child labour during the 1990s, our study has come to some major conclusions:

- ❖ *Poverty alleviation* is probably the best solution to the urban child labour problem, but in a country with poor economic characteristics like Bangladesh, urban poverty cannot be solved in a short span of time. The economic and social *empowerment of the poor urban families along with their children* might be a better solution. Special type of NFE and marketable vocational skill training with job-placement support can play a significant role to alleviate poverty of the poor families and thus alleviate the misery of child labour.

❖ With education and skill training, emphasis should also be given in *healthcare, immunization, nutrition*, etc. through *networking with the social welfare departments* of the GOB, philanthropic organizations, NGOs working in the health sector, local hospitals, city corporations, etc. to extend their cooperation to the street and working children in a systematic way.

❖ During the 1990s, *education and skill training* emerged as a commonly accepted strategy to prevent intergenerational poverty and the *quickest way out of the vicious cycle*. It is widely believed that with increasing educational facilities and opportunities, child labour will also decline as children will gain sufficient knowledge and skills to overcome limitations imposed by poverty and lack of capacity and opportunity.

❖ The *present primary education system* is not effective for the urban poor and underprivileged groups including street and working children. It is not attractive to and affordable for the working children nor is it helpful for them. There is also very little correlation between primary education in the present form and opportunity of getting better jobs.

❖ Providing *non-formal education* (NFE) might be a solution. Free schooling or even schooling with stipends will make it attractive, but only for a short period – in the long run it also will fail, because the root of this problem lies in the need of the family to send their children to work for income supplementation.

❖ *Mainstreaming* the poor children into the national education system through providing NFE on a pilot basis was found to be effective only where the families of these children were supported to raise their income levels in the near future. Without such support, the poor parents cannot afford their children's education and thus the children tend to dropout or be unwilling to get admitted in schools. In other words, working children and their families are more interested in such an education (both the general and technical) that will lead to the subsequent gainful employment of the children. In the absence of such assurance the parents will tend to employ their children in jobs rather than enroll them in schools. In this term, the demand for vocational skill training after some NFE is much more higher than getting education only. Therefore, to attract the families and the children, to keep the children attached to the school with a higher retention rate, and to achieve a better result at the end, a combination of NFE and skill training is very important.

❖ The *quality* vocational/pre-vocational training programme is too expensive compared to NFE and other interventions. Therefore, this intervention is notoriously limited in Bangladesh. Even under the public vocational system of the GOB, this facility is very much limited and there is no provision to accommodate the working children there. For its high expenditure, many NGOs, even the ILO-IPEC, could not widely replicate it in Bangladesh during the 1990s.

❖ Even NFE and *inexpensive* skill training are beyond the economic means of the poor urban working children. So, a *Special Bank* should be developed by the GOB and donor agencies *to provide small credit* to them for their education and self-employment. Existing small credit facilities of the big NGOs like BRAC, Proshika, Grameen Bank, etc. should also be enhanced for this purpose.

❖ There is a significant correlation between the *provision of skill training and the success of the NFE programme* in a single project. NFE linked with skill training provisions was found to be more successful in terms of high attendance rate, low dropout rate, high retention rate, high quality of students, etc. as found in the UCEP programme. But where there was no link between NFE and skill training, all these rates of NFE were very poor as was found in the HTR project for example. Nevertheless, not all skill training is important and attractive to the working children. Any skill training programme without high opportunity of gainful self-employment or job-placement is not effective and appropriate in this regard. Similarly, simplistic and traditional teaching-learning method, without working children's life-oriented curriculum, close follow-up, counseling and motivational activities, harmless participatory lessons with the help of teaching aids, and other social work services cannot achieve a satisfactory level of results.

❖ In this respect it is to be noted that *withdrawal* of children from work may not be the solution as it was found in the mid-1990s among the garment factories' child labourers, who were withdrawn after the passing of the Harkin Bill in the US Congress. Sometimes, of course, it is important to withdraw child labourers who are involved in highly hazardous works. At the same time, providing alternative employment to them is also equally important. Alternatively, income generating activities of their families are to be supported.

❖ In some cases, *apprenticeship* is very rational for those children who are in circumstances where there is an unlimited supply of labour in any organized sector vis-à-vis a few employment opportunities, a high demand for skilled labour and a very limited opportunity to achieve skill training outside of the industry. Apprenticeship with some earnings together with schooling facilities for minimum literacy and numeracy is an effective and appropriate method specially for the organized sector child labourers like those in the garment factories.

❖ Last but not the least, to eradicate child labour successfully, the *multi-party, collaborative, and need-based* interventions are very important and effective. Any single body/organization cannot solve the problem. Similarly, any single programme e.g. non-formal education or skill training cannot be effective alone. Moreover, for the successful and dynamic programme operation and for ensuring the highest level of results, phase-wise programme assessment and impact assessment after the completion of a certain period is very important. But in this respect, the present study has observed a huge gap and negligence among the different parties except a very few like the UCEP.