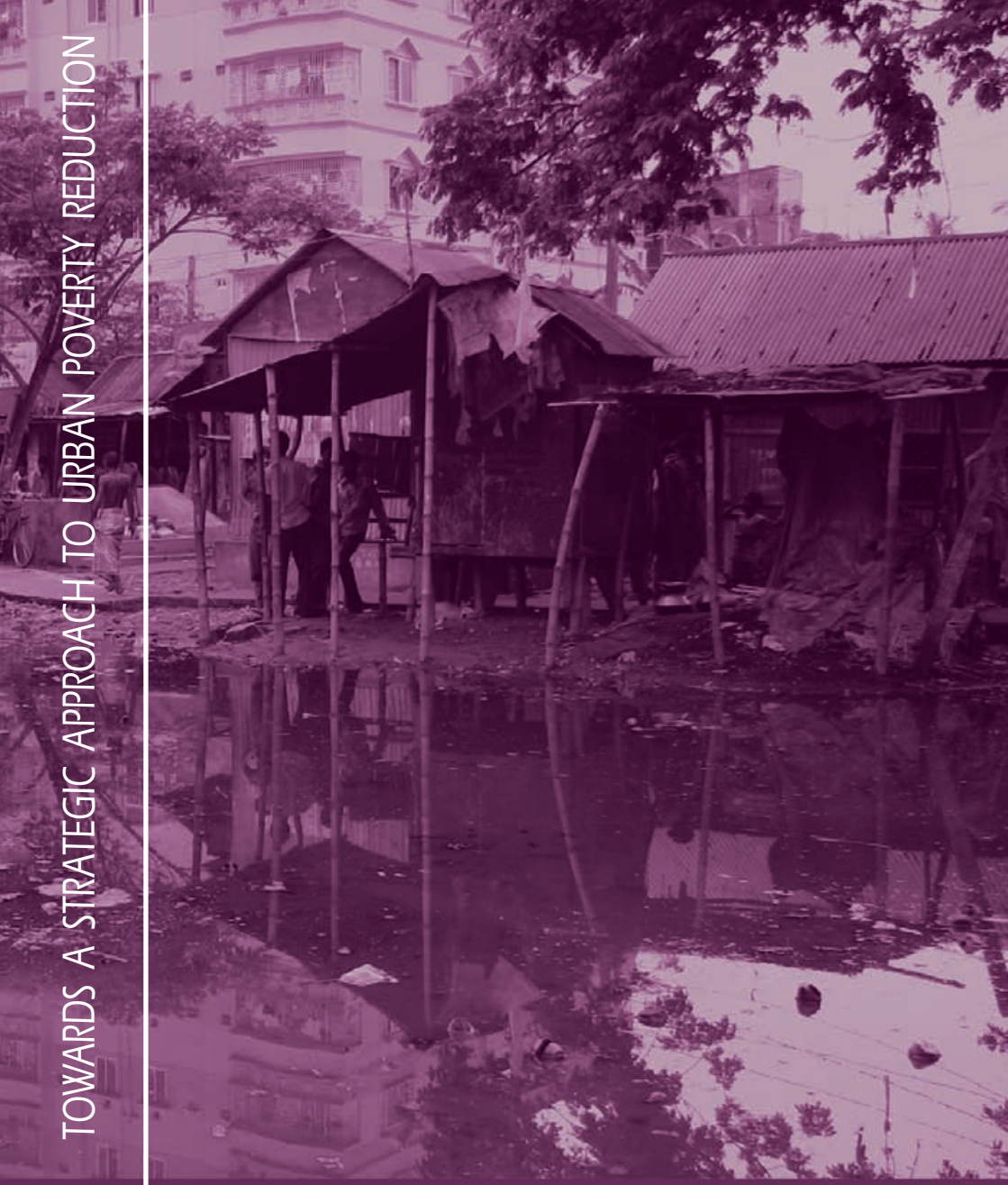
TOWARDS A STRATEGIC APPROACH TO URBAN POVERTY REDUCTION



Bridging the Urban Divide
in Bangladesh

Event report for the joint Conversation Event of the Local Government Division, Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development and Cooperatives and the LCG Urban Sector

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On 15-16 January 2010, the LCG Urban Sector Working Group gathered with representatives from central and urban governmental entities, development partners, academics and civil society to discuss strategic approaches for urban poverty reduction in Bangladesh and ways forward in “Bridging the Urban Divide”.

This compilation has been made possible with the support of all those who attended the event and, in particular, many contributing members of the Urban Sector working group who together collected the evidence, prepared and made this conversation happen, and finally helped publish this end product.

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Foreword

The Conversation Event 'Bridging the Urban Divide' was held in Sylhet on 15 and 16 January 2010. This was the first major effort of its kind organized by the LCG Urban Sector Working Group on the challenge of poverty in urbanizing Bangladesh. Its outcomes are presented in this report. When talking about efficient policies for reducing poverty, a focus on the urban setting is increasingly important: today, a large and largely forgotten proportion of Bangladesh's poor people live in urban areas. The need to address poverty in urban areas is particularly relevant as the urban setting is a source of both problems and solutions but has not yet received enough attention, let alone tangible policies and strategies. With the Government - in office now for just over one year - so clearly dedicated to poverty reduction, and with the reform of the consultative mechanism between donors and Government, we believe that it is important to address the issue of urban poverty reduction as a priority. Therefore the 'Sylhet Conversation' was initiated to help us in identifying solutions which are practical and which will have direct and tangible benefits to people living in Bangladesh's urban environments.

When talking about the challenges, we have to commence with the facts and the rather startling realities: urbanization is both a cause and consequence of economic growth. We live in a world which is becoming increasingly urban. However, it is a globally proven fact that urbanization is an irreversible, dynamic process interlinked with socio-economic change. It is up to government policies and the perception of "the urban" within society as a whole which determines if these changes will be beneficiary for society ...or not. While in Europe and the Americas more than three quarters of the population are already urban dwellers, urban growth in the 21st Century will take place predominantly in Asia. This continent will account for 63% of the world's urban population by 2050, around 3.3 billion people. Bangladesh is no exception to this: urbanisation is occurring at a rapid rate; at 4% the annual growth rate in urban areas is more than 2.5 times faster than that in rural areas. By 2030 about 99 million people will be living in Bangladesh's towns and cities. As this country is one of the poorest and most densely populated

worldwide, the impacts of urbanization in Bangladesh are and will be exceptionally severe. The number of urban poor will soon, according to the trends, exceed the number of rural poor if nothing is done. In other words, the need to reduce poverty in urban areas is overwhelmingly clear.

Complicating this is that many opinion leaders and politicians have prejudiced views about urbanization. They believe that cities are parasitic, that urban development is opposed to rural development, that rural to urban migration is bad and should be reversed, and that slum improvement and urban poverty reduction programmes will pull more people to the cities. These views are not evidence based, but are instead misconceptions based on prejudice. Also complicating this is a particular perspective which can be attributed to some of the special development authorities who are responsible for providing services and amenities in towns and cities, namely the view that slum populations represent illegal occupants.

Efficient urban poverty reduction requires first of all a comprehensive understanding of the matter and a thorough evaluation of all the influential factors and actors. A common vision and close cooperation are the prerequisites for action. Complex as the urban setting itself, urban coalitions have to be built with different stakeholders, of whom many participated in the conversation: government, civil society, academics and development partners. Among the most relevant actors for reducing urban poverty, however, are the poor themselves. Generally misconceived as somehow passive objects, the urban poor are in fact active and creative; they are dynamic agents of change, but they are also vulnerable and need relevant support. Wherever urban poor communities are enabled to do so, they have proven able to identify, prioritise, and plan to solve their own problems, participating in the implementation and steering of the measures for improvement. These are good reasons to engage and to support the poor, for their own benefit as well as for improved urban environments generally.

Notwithstanding, the urban poor have been and continue to be largely excluded from national policies, urban planning processes and development plans, and social safety nets. One of the most distressing facts is that the vast majority of poor urban dwellers in Bangladesh cannot live without the fear of eviction. But security of tenure - i. e. ensuring the right to have a secure home - is a trigger point for helping communities develop. If households have improved security, they are willing to invest their own resources in improving their living environments, with the secondary health, social and economic benefits that follow. Land tenure security is therefore among the most important factors for reducing urban poverty; however, while crucial, it is still only one dimension of urban poverty. For that reason, and in preparation for the conversation event, we identified nine „critical areas" and gathered existing evidence on each topic to provide an overview of the current situation, as well as some preliminary ideas on key issues for action. This material forms the basis of the "evidence for action" section of this booklet presented in Section 1. In Section 2, the outcomes of the conversation event itself are presented. The nine identified themes served as the basis for the nine working groups at the event, and the results of these groups – including suggested actions - are documented below, supplemented by other ideas, thoughts and suggestions that participants contributed in plenary sessions and on 'comment cards' and posters throughout the event.

We chose the format of a "conversation" to enable the exchange of thoughts and opinions among different people. The term implies certain characteristics which we aimed for. Like in any good conversation, which takes place in someone's home and family, everyone has a chance to speak. Secondly, everyone's opinion is valued - even if some family members are more vocal than others. This presupposes closeness, and we certainly came to know each other better after two days spent together. Thirdly, there is usually a sharing of perspectives and vigorous, sometimes heated, debate; but also teasing, humour, and a good amount of laughter. Finally, a conversation is usually of practical value and aims to come to common solutions. That we were broadly successful in our shared endeavor is reflected in the common understandings and practical commitments contained in the 'Conversation Memoire'.

Now that the event has taken place, it is important to think about mechanisms for a continuous conversation, including email networks and communities of practice; communication channels that can help in sharing experience and knowledge in the future. Our challenge, following this event, will not only be to take our agreed actions forward, but also to keep the conversation alive, and this is important because situations change, knowledge grows, and learning from experience may mean new solutions to problems.

A conversation always begins somewhere, with someone speaking and someone listening, answering, confirming or challenging the thoughts of the other. Though we, as the co-conveners - the Local Government Division (LGD), UNDP and the German Development Cooperation represented by GTZ - were privileged to be among the first to speak, we went there to listen and share our thoughts with our fellow participants, among them representatives from government, civil society and poor urban communities as well as from all the development partners active in the urban sector. The event benefited especially from the many perspectives and various backgrounds of the participants. Thank you all for having participated, witnessed or now taken interest in this first national conversation on urban poverty and development in Bangladesh.

The Chairs of the LCG URBAN SECTOR Working Group

The chairs: (left to right) Alexander Jachnow (GTZ), Robert Juhkam (UNDP), and LGD Secretary Monzur Hossain, with Badar Uddin Ahmed Kamran, Mayor of Sylhet at Nazimgarh Resort, January 2010

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and

the LCG Working Group Urban Sector,

Bangladesh

Preface

Acknowledgements I
Foreword III

Section 1 - Background: Evidence for Action

Introduction 2

Urbanization in Bangladesh 3
Opportunities: Urbanization and economic growth 3
Challenges: Managing urbanization and poverty 5
Solutions: A strategic approach to urban poverty 9

Critical Areas for Urban Poverty Reductions Strategies 11
Urban - Rural Linkages 11
Health 15
Social Cohesion and Security 19
Labour Markets 24
Urban Municipal Governance 28
Land Tenure and Security 32
Environment 37
Education 44
Extreme Urban Poverty 50

Section 2 - Event Report: Bridging the Urban Divide

Welcome Speech by the Honorable Mayor of Sylhet, Mr Badar Uddin Ahmed Kamran 56
Welcome Speech by the Member of Parliament, Ms Chemon Ara Begum 58

Introduction 60
Some Comments by Community Representatives 61

Thematic Areas 63
Urban - Rural Linkages 64
Health 68
Social Cohesion and Security 72

Labour Markets 76
Urban Municipal Governance 79
Land Tenure and Security 85
Environment 87
Education 91
Extreme Urban Poverty 95

Conclusion: Next Steps 98

Appendices

1. Conversation Memoire 102
2. Event Programme 107
3. Achieving Vision 2021: Some strategic considerations for urban development in Bangladesh 110
4. Further Readings 114
5. Table of Urban Projects 125

SECTION 1

Background: Evidence for Action

Introduction

The evidence presented in this section was compiled to provide the participants of the joint Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development and Cooperatives and Local Consultative Group Urban Sector Working Group conversation event 'Bridging the Urban Divide', with background information on the current situation and future trends regarding urban poverty and urbanization in Bangladesh. To this end, material was gathered from a wide array of sources and studies, including Government of Bangladesh statistics and policy documents, academic research, project reports, working papers and other publications and research carried out by national, bi- and multi-lateral organizations, NGOs and research institutes.

The section begins with an overview of urbanization in Bangladesh and identifies a range of opportunities, challenges and potential solutions relating to urbanization and urban poverty reduction. Following this, nine 'critical areas' for urban poverty reduction are considered in more detail: urban-rural linkages; health; social cohesion and security; labour markets; urban municipal governance; land tenure and security; environment; education; and extreme urban poverty. Each critical area contains an overview of the current situation as well as key issues for action based on the evidence presented.

The conversation event was structured to reflect these nine thematic areas and the evidence and issues presented in this section should be read in conjunction with the findings from the Event which are presented in Section 2.

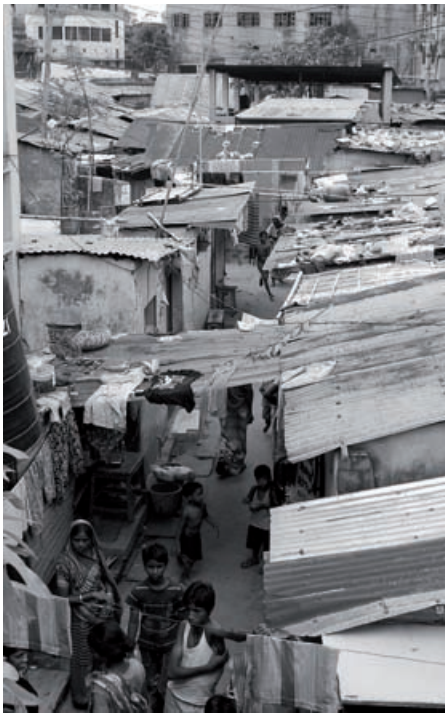
Taken together, these two sections are intended to provide policy makers and other key stakeholders with evidence-based arguments and ideas for action that can assist in the development of an informed strategic approach to urban poverty in Bangladesh.

Urbanization in Bangladesh

- Opportunities, Challenges and Solutions -

Opportunities: Urbanization and economic growth

Urbanization is both a cause and consequence of economic growth. Ever since people began to build permanent settlements, towns and cities have acted as the hubs for major economic activities. Some people come from rural areas to urban centres temporarily to exchange goods or information while others move permanently with hopes for new and better lives. The concentration of people with diverse skills and different backgrounds and the trading of products and services in the hustle and bustle of cities attracts investors and entrepreneurs who seek to take advantage of the availability of labor and skills as well as greater markets for their products or services. In this way, economic activities taking place in cities help to drive economic growth as well as broader cultural and political developments within a society.



As a consequence, as a nation develops economically, its urban areas expand and become more prominent. We live in a world which is becoming increasingly urban. Although the majority of urban centres are presently located in developed countries - where 70% of the population are already urban - future urban growth will take place predominantly in the developing world. By 2050, 95% of global urban growth will have occurred in developing countries; Asia will account for 63% of the world's urban population - or 3.3 billion people. (UN-Habitat, State of the World's Cities 2008-2009)

Bangladesh remains a predominantly agrarian country with only 27% of the population – around 38 million people – currently living in urban areas*. However, while the present level of urbanization is still relatively low, the urban population growth rate is 2.5%, which is significantly higher than the 1.4% growth rate of the population as a whole. As a result, the urban population is predicted to reach 51 million by 2015, or 32% of the total population. At the same time, the contribution of towns and cities to national GDP has also been increasing rapidly, expanding from 26% in 1972 to more than 50% by 2005. It is important to note that while the export-orientated sectors such as the garment industry have contributed significantly to the growing dominance of the urban economy, it is the informal sector – from domestic workers to micro-entrepreneurs – that provides employment for more than 70% of the urban workforce (Maligalig, 2009).

The majority of the urban population in Bangladesh are concentrated in a few large cities. Dhaka – with 13 million people and an annual growth rate of 4% - accounts for about 40% of the national urban population (UN-Habitat, State of the World's Cities 2008-2009). Together with three other large metropolitan cities - Chittagong, Khulna, and Rajshahi - these four cities contain over 56% of the total urban population (Roberts, 2006). Nevertheless, a significant proportion of urban dwellers - at least 31% - reside in 309 'Pourashavas' (municipalities or 'secondary cities'; Roberts, 2009) and there is increasing international recognition that these cities contribute significantly to sustainable urbanization, economic growth and strengthening rural economies through rural-urban linkages with smaller market towns.

* Except where noted, all figures in this paragraph from Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics, 2005 cited by Urban Governance and Infrastructure Improvement Sector Project (2008)

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Challenges: Managing urbanization and poverty

Although urbanization contributes to increased economic growth by creating job opportunities, facilitating commercial activities and driving industrial development, the rapid pace of change can place great pressure on a town or city's physical and social infrastructure. Within developing countries, local and national management capacities are often weak and planning processes and resources poorly coordinated. Already overstretched town and city administrations find it increasingly difficult to provide adequate housing, transportation, waste and sanitation, education, health and other essential services to an ever-growing number of residents. In Bangladesh, as the revised draft of the Second National Strategy for Accelerated Poverty Reduction (NSAPR-II) recognizes (NSAPR-II p. 36, 2009), limited planning capacities and resources, a lack of communication between different planning levels, inadequate decentralization and insufficient channels for community participation in the planning process all combine to undermine effective urban management.

All city dwellers feel the consequences of inadequately managed urbanization, but it is the poorest households who are affected most severely. They are not only the most vulnerable to poor health, insecurity and other risks, but public services are often concentrated in more affluent areas or inaccessible to the poor while private facilities are of variable quality and beyond the reach of many. This situation drives the growth of more severe forms of urban poverty as vulnerable citizens – both new migrants and long-term residents – find themselves unable to protect their families against the consequences of unemployment, ill-health, eviction, crime or other 'shocks' that strip them of their assets, destroy their livelihoods and keep them trapped in poverty.

Climate change is likely to exacerbate this situation. Land and livelihoods lost to sea rise and river erosion may lead to increased migration to urban areas. And these urban areas may in turn be less able to accommodate new migrants owing to increased occurrences of flooding, extreme heat and other environmental challenges (WWF, 2009).

Presently about one-third of the world's urban population is poor, accounting for about a quarter of the world's poor population (Baker, 2008). However, estimates of the number of the urban poor vary depending upon the measurements used. Because the urban poor rely more heavily on cash income to secure their basic needs, income-based poverty measures tend to underestimate urban poverty in comparison with those that look at consumption or take other dimensions of poverty into account (such as access to basic services). As a result, the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS) poverty head count ratio for 2000 using the 'cost of basic needs' method was 36.6% in urban areas compared to a rural figure of 53%, while estimates for the same year using measures of 'direct calorie intake' were 52.5% in

urban areas against only 42.3% in rural settings*. The 2004 BBS Poverty Monitoring Survey, again using direct calories intake, found an improvement to 43.6% in urban areas, but despite this it was still higher than the rural figure of 40.1%. While the most appropriate means of measuring urban poverty is a highly complex issue (Bapat, 2009), the disparity between these figures clearly illustrates that there is no room for complacency about declining rates of urban poverty. It is also worth noting that while national measures of this kind are useful for policy purposes, it is important that they do not crowd out recognition of the diversity of experiences and characteristics of the 'urban poor'. Age, gender, educational background, livelihood, ethnicity, religion and a host of other factors vary within and between groups and individuals, and policy measures that seek to address the needs of the urban poor must be sensitive to this diversity. The recognition in the revised NSAPR II of the need for improved statistical databases for urban planning is therefore welcome (NSAPR-II, 2009) but it is crucial that any such initiatives include attempts to develop better poverty measurement methods for urban areas which take adequate account of the complex nature of urban poverty.

While not all urban poor in live in slums, the growth since Independence in the size, scale and density of 'bustees', or slum settlements, has been great. A census in 2005 found that the slum population in the six largest cities was about 35 percent, or 5.4 million people, of the total population. Slums in Dhaka were more than seven times as dense as the city as a whole. (Islam, 2005)

As will be explored in greater detail in the 'critical issues' section below, residents in these settlements face a wide variety of common challenges, from poor physical infrastructure and inadequate basic services, to highly insecure land tenure and greater vulnerability to violence and crime. Yet conditions vary considerably between and within different poor urban settlements and there is no such thing as a "typical" slum (Islam, 2005). This is true in large cities** as well as secondary cities.*** Effective urban poverty reduction programmes therefore need to develop approaches that enable local responses to local priorities, so that communities themselves are empowered to contribute towards the overall goal of addressing urban poverty in Bangladesh.

* All statistics in this paragraph from Statistics for Monitoring Attainment of MDGs in Bangladesh, Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics - www.bbs.gov.bd/dataindex/MDGs%20in%20Bangladesh.doc

** For example, the 2005 census found that while over 60% of slum communities in Dhaka with fewer than 100 inhabitants had both a fixed place for garbage disposal and regular garbage collection, less than 37% of slums over 500 and only 25% of slums with more than 5,000 had them . By comparison, in Chittagong only about one-third of communities under 1,000 inhabitants had a fixed place for garbage disposal and 13% of slum communities with populations of over 1,000.

*** A survey carried out in 2008 by Narayanganj Pourashava for the GTZ-supported Enhancing Municipal Governance for Poverty Reduction Project found significant variation both within and between slums in the same secondary city. In education alone, the rates of basic education across the five-surveyed areas varied from 33% in one slum to 73.7%, 65.1% and 60% respectively.

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Urban Poverty and the Millennium Development Goals*

Bangladesh is making noteworthy progress towards achieving many of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), reflecting significant achievements in key areas such as human development. However, despite these achievements, there are significant challenges remaining in areas such as poverty reduction and employment generation (Goal 1), creation of more wage employment for women (Goal 3), reduction of the maternal mortality ratio and increase in the presence of skilled health professionals at delivery (Goal 5), and increase in correct and comprehensive knowledge of HIV/AIDS (Goal 6).

While urban populations are closer to the targets in some areas, in others they are lagging behind rural populations. For example, while the prevalence of underweight children (Indicator 1.8) has been declining faster in urban areas than rural ones, the proportion of the population living with a dietary consumption of less than 1805 kcal (Indicator 1.9) – used as a proxy of hardcore poverty – is on-target in rural areas but significantly off-track in urban settings. It is also significant to note that in the latest progress report on the MDGs in Bangladesh, no reference at all was made to progress on Goal 7, Target 11 – improving the lives of slum dwellers.

While urban development programmes face particular difficulties in meeting the needs of large numbers of people in challenging physical and social environments, they also have some comparative advantages. For example, a greater density of population and also of services providers – both public, private and NGO – enables more cost-effective delivery models than in rural settings. This situation is an opportunity upon which Bangladesh could capitalise, with the potential to rapidly improve the lives of millions of the urban poor and take a sizeable step towards meeting its MDG targets. For example, a rapid increase in access to institutional delivery for the urban poor - using existing public, private and NGO facilities - could help Bangladesh to kick-start its stalling progress on maternal deaths and increase the presence of skilled birth attendants (Goal 5).

*See Millennium Development Goals Bangladesh Progress Report 2008

Solutions: A strategic approach to urban poverty

Over the years the Government of Bangladesh (GoB) has introduced several rural poverty reduction programmes, many with an emphasis on protecting the poor from destitution in the wake of floods and seasonal food shortages. In contrast, its urban poverty reduction programmes are more recent and less well-developed, and a comprehensive urban poverty reduction strategy remains to be formulated. The election of a new democratically elected government provides a major window of opportunity for the GoB to work with development partners and civil society to formulate this strategy.

The revised second National Strategy for Accelerated Poverty Reduction (NSAPR) is an important strategic vision for the nation and provides a context for developing the sixth Bangladesh five-year development plan.

Urban issues feature throughout the strategy and there are many important commitments in both the Strategic Blocks and Supporting Strategies (including the sections on pro-poor growth, essential infrastructure, human resources, good governance, the environment and public services). In particular, the section on 'urban development' in Strategic Block II ('pro-poor economic growth') provides an important and wide ranging overview of the major challenges for Bangladesh's towns and cities. Nevertheless, in the absence of a specific 'block' dedicated to the challenges of rapid urbanization in Bangladesh within the NSAPR - or a GoB Urban Sector Policy on which to base a strategic approach to the sector - there is scope to set out a strategic vision on urban poverty reduction and to develop an 'action plan' that would supplement and support the commitments contained in the NSAPR. This 'supporting vision' would be a major step towards developing a more coherent approach to managing urban poverty reduction going forward.

The joint GoB and development partner members of the Local Consultative Group's Urban Sector Subgroup have therefore convened this 'conversation event' to begin a dialogue on urban poverty reduction in Bangladesh. The aim of the event is to develop common understandings on urban poverty and a joint vision for strategic approaches to urban poverty reduction. What is set out in the following sections is evidence on a variety of critical thematic areas all interlinked with each other.

Critical Areas
for Urban Poverty Reduction Strategies

Urban - Rural Linkages

Overview

It is widely recognized that there is a strong interdependence of social, economic and environmental development between rural and urban areas. In Bangladesh, both city corporations and secondary cities play an important role in rural development as markets for their goods and products, as the site for food processing (Mazed, 2003) and other agricultural related activities, and as sources of non-farm income, especially from wage-labour. Conversely, urban areas rely on rural areas for food production, labour, raw materials for manufacturing and markets for their products. The exchange between rural and urban households, enterprises and economies is thus critical for both urban and rural development. This linkage is even stronger in secondary cities and towns primarily due to their physical proximity to the surrounding countryside (UN-HABITAT, 2007). These smaller cities often serve as centres of trade as well as sites for other social and economic activities. Furthermore, these towns are often importance centres of service delivery for their rural hinterland. Rural people can access public service offices in the towns with less difficulty than offices in metropolitan cities and hospitals, while schools and other facilities serve a large number of the rural population, contributing significantly to rural development (Satterthwaite, 2003).

In addition to these fundamental economic links between 'town' and 'country', which may only involve infrequent and short-term visits to urban centres by rural residents, longer-term migration from rural to urban areas is of considerable significance to both rural and urban development.

While cities benefit from an influx of cheap labour, the flow of public and private capital resulting from migration has the potential to lead both directly and indirectly to rural development.

Remittances from urban workers to their rural relatives are of particular significance in contributing to the maintenance of rural livelihoods and development. These transfers of money and assets are a crucial livelihood strategy for many of the rural poor as a response to long-term challenges such as lack of employment or land; seasonal challenges, such as Monga; and serious environmental catastrophes. In these cases, urban migration offers for many the chance to find potential sources of income in nearby cities, often to the benefit of those who remain behind. For example, a recent study demonstrated the potential for migration to benefit those who remain in villages as well as those who migrated, as households who received remittances were found to be less vulnerable in the aftermath of floods compared to those who lacked any links with relatives who had migrated (Rayhan, 2007).

Rural-urban linkages may also be crucial for the urban poor. The urban poor are particularly prone to food insecurity, with a higher percentage of urban residents falling below the 'direct calorie intake' poverty line. (BBS) **Given their high reliance on cash-income to purchase food, rapid increases in food prices – for example, during the recent global food price crisis - are a particular problem for a population that is already severely undernourished.**

As a result, the urban population is closely reliant on rural food production and supply and rural-urban linkages require enhanced attention in relation to securing food security for the urban poor. Further, there is international evidence – for example from Indonesia in the late 1990s - that during periods of major economic crisis, significant numbers of 'prime age adults' may choose to relocate from urban to rural areas (Fallon, 2002).

Key issues

Strengthening rural-urban links with secondary towns would contribute significantly to both rural and urban development.

The contribution of secondary cities and towns to rural economic development depends largely on the state of urban development in these urban centres. Depending on transport, communication and storage facilities, secondary cities and towns can play a more or less vital role in linking rural farmers to the urban market. For instance, developing road networks between secondary towns and rural districts greatly benefits rural farmers as it enables them to transfer their agro-produces to bigger markets (Tacoli, 2003). In urban areas, the level of local industrial development will impact significantly on demand for raw materials that are required for the industrial production process. All sorts of construction material like brick, wood, bamboo, etc. are produced in the the countryside of Bangladesh, serving as supply centers for urban demand. The support of urban industries and related branches requires adequate infrastructure such as intact urban-rural transfer routes, communication and information structures. Those investments result in both enhanced rural and urban productivity.

Urban poverty reduction programmes will not significantly increase urban migration.

Rural to urban migration is a complex phenomenon and the decision to migrate or not is influenced by numerous 'push' and 'pull' factors. Within Bangladesh, a crucial push factor is environmental hazards that force the rural poor to search for new livelihoods. Recent studies confirm that ecological instability and environmental destruction – all issues that will be exacerbated by climate change - are major reasons for rural-to-urban migration (Rayhan, 2007). Natural disasters that hit the countryside periodically often destroy the livelihoods, income and food resources of thousands of rural residents. The impacts of natural disasters are increased by the inability of many to rebuild their lives following these events, resulting in waves of environmental migrants to both secondary and larger cities. Urban migration is also influenced by the existence of employment opportunities, particularly in the informal sector, which act as a pull-factor to the rural poor to migrate either temporarily, seasonally or for the longer term (AKM, 2004). Existing social networks are also of considerable significance, with migrants more likely to choose destinations where existing networks of family and friends are already established (Chowdhury, 2009). Given the dominance of the key drivers for migration outlined above, targeted urban poverty reduction programmes that aim to alleviate the worst effects of urban poverty are unlikely to be the decisive factor in people's decisions to migrate. Rural migrants do not purposefully choose to join the growing ranks of the urban poor. Many are driven by the desire to increase their income and earning potential and their decision to migrate will be more strongly affected by perceived employment

opportunities than the existence or absence of a poverty reduction programme. Similarly, those migrants who face little choice in their decision to migrate – especially those affected by environmental catastrophe (Rayhan, 2007) – are more likely to be 'pushed' into cities by loss of livelihoods and land than 'pulled' into them by development programmes. Targeted cash transfer programmes, for example, which seek to reach only those most in need are unlikely to have more than a marginal effect on the decision making of potential migrants, especially given the much more widespread existence of such programmes in rural areas in Bangladesh. This is supported by evidence among rickshaw pullers that increased educational opportunities for their children in rural areas are insufficient to 'pull' them back to their villages because, as landless labourers, the absence of economic opportunities in rural areas remains the dominant factor (Begum, 2005). However, while poverty reduction programmes are unlikely to greatly affect migration decisions, they may have important indirect effects on rural poverty, as on-going research by BRAC Development Institute (BDI), BRAC University on urban poverty and slums shows that the urban poor with stable income are more likely to invest in their villages.

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Health

Overview

Globally, towns and cities are generally better served than rural areas in terms of access to healthcare. Doctors and other health professionals are frequently drawn from the urban middle class and reluctant to pursue careers in isolated rural localities, while greater concentrations of wealth and people result in a larger number of service providers – both public and private. Bangladesh in no different, as the 2008 Bangladesh Health Workforce Strategy recognizes*. However, this fact masks the reality that despite a higher density of facilities, health care may still remain inaccessible to the urban poor because of high costs, lack of information and other barriers. In Bangladesh, this is further exacerbated by the fact that while most secondary and tertiary facilities – both government and private – are located in urban areas, formal responsibility for primary health care (PHC) rests with City Corporations, Pourashavas and the Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development and Cooperatives (MoLGRD&C) rather than the Ministry of Health. While some cities - such as Chittagong - have developed considerable capacities in health, in the majority of towns and cities services are largely limited to vaccinations and other vertical health programmes such as those for HIV/AIDS and TB. As a result, in accessing primary healthcare services, the urban poor are frequently forced to choose between expensive or variable quality private services, or the inappropriate use of secondary facilities such as government hospitals.

From this slum map it is clearly visible that most households in this slum cannot afford a private clinic or go to a private hospital. Instead they are limited to government facilities or simply a pharmacy to suit their medical needs.

Location: Rally Bagan Slum Narayanganj
Source: UPRIS software GTZ, 2010

This situation was reflected in the 2006 Urban Health Survey (UHS) where only 51% of urban slum dwellers reported that there was an available health programme or service centre in their community, and of these only 10.6% were government facilities (compared with 26.4% run by NGOs or private facilities). Further, while 71.4% of wealthier non-slum areas reported the presence of a qualified allopathic doctor in their locality, in slums this figure was only 26.8%, leaving many residents reliant on pharmacies and homeopathic doctors.**

The healthcare challenges faced by the urban poor are also reflected in health outcomes in cities and towns. For example, the UHS found high rates of reported ill health and serious illness in all urban areas, including adult men and women of working age, and the rates were especially high in poor slum populations. The same survey also found very poor nutritional status among women in slums, with both under-nutrition and over-nutrition a significant problem. Similarly, under-five mortality rates were much higher in slums – fourteen times that of non-slums – while rates of stunting and wasting were 56% and 17% respectively in slums compared to 36% and 10% in non-slums. This finding is supported by an analysis of Demographic and Health Surveys from eleven countries - including Bangladesh – which found that while child nutrition is on average worse in rural areas, extremely high intra-urban health differentials (with up to ten times worse rates of stunting between children from the poorest and richest households) mean that the outcomes for the poorest quintile in urban areas are almost the same as for poor rural dwellers (Menon, 2000).

The sector-wide Health, Nutrition and Population Sector Program (HNPSP) is the largest programme of support to the health sector and aims to: (i) accelerate the achievement of health-related MDG and PRSP goals through service delivery; (ii) meet emerging HNP sector challenges; and (iii) implement key reform areas such as health sector diversification, decentralisation and stimulating demand for health services. In recognition of the challenges facing the urban poor in relation to healthcare, the Conceptual Framework and Sector Investment Plan (SIP) - the planning bases of HNPSP - identified urban health service development as a key policy area in achieving its long term strategic goals, included exploring a more integrated approach to urban health planning with the MoLGRD&C.

In parallel to HNPSP, attempts have been made by the MoLGRD&C to improve the provision of primary healthcare to the urban poor through the ADB and other donor supported second Urban Primary Healthcare Programme (UPHCP-II), which currently operates in six City Corporations and five municipalities***. The programme aims to improve: (i) access to and use of urban PHC services in the project areas, with a particular focus on extending provision to the poorest; (ii) the quality of urban PHC services in the project area; and (iii) the cost-effectiveness, efficiency, and institutional and financial sustainability of PHC to meet the needs of the urban poor. UPHCP-II contracts with NGOs to deliver a package of essential primary care services through 'partnership arrangements' – that include provision of investment for constructing and upgrading health facilities - and uses a 'red card' system to ensure that 30% of

its services are provided to the poor for free (defined as those earning less than 700 Thaka per month).

Other major healthcare programmes operating in urban areas include BRAC's $26 million 'Manoshi' health programme, which provides maternal healthcare services to slum-dwellers (primarily in City Corporations); the USAID funded Smiling Sun franchise scheme (which operates in both rural and urban settings); and networks of clinics run by individual NGOs such as Marie Stopes. While these programmes all make valuable contributions to improving access to healthcare for the urban poor, as the findings of the 2006 UHS reflect, there remains significant need for further health system development in urban settings.

Given the considerable evidence of the crucial links between ill-health and poverty (for example see Pryer, 1993), improving access to health services is not only important in itself, but may also reduce the number of households in need of other forms of assistance. In this context, the NSAPR II contains a welcome recognition of the challenges of providing healthcare in urban areas, the importance of facilitating access to essential service package for the urban poor and slum dwellers, and the need to strengthen the roles of both the MoLG,RD&C and the Ministry of Health in improving the provision of urban healthcare services (NSAPR-II, 2009). However, while it rightly highlights the importance of UPHCP-II, it does not sufficiently recognize that for areas not yet covered by the programme, the provision of primary health care services by the Ministry of Health is extremely limited. This is supported by the Aide Memoire for the 2009 Annual Review of HNPSP which stated, "limited progress has been made in the area of urban health services development." While it recognized the achievements of UPHCP-II, it noted that the project "covers only a part of the urban areas and still remains largely outside of the HNPSP framework,". As a result, the Memoire concludes that, "there is a need to develop an Urban Health Strategy to expand primary health care services to a growing number of people living in the urban areas."

Key issue

Improving healthcare for the urban poor could be highly cost-efficient given the density of existing service providers.

Unlike in rural Bangladesh, where the Government is often the only provider of healthcare services and human resource constraints are severe, in urban settings there are a wide range and concentration of providers and health professionals. As a result, alternative financing mechanisms offer the potential for the poor to quickly increase their access to adequate healthcare services. UPHCP-II is an important step in this direction, with long-term contracts enabling NGOs to invest and scale up their services over the course of the programme. However, access remains inadequate and there is potential to tap the resources of a wider range of service providers, including the private sector. For example, in Narayanganj Pourashava, a survey of

potential maternal providers of maternal healthcare found sixteen private clinics offering emergency care in addition to four NGOs and three government facilities.

The Annual Programme Review (APR) of HNPSP called for the development of innovative financing mechanisms and noted that the main channels for developing and supporting these could be outside the Ministry of Health. The APR also specifically singled out the potential for public private partnerships and contracting-out to provide services to urban populations where public sector PHC is not presently available. Given the existing disparities in maternal healthcare provision for the urban poor, where urban slum populations are considerably disadvantaged in relation to other urban residents, this offers a good 'entry point' for future urban health sector development, especially in those Pourashavas that are not covered by UPHCP-II. An existing maternal heathcare voucher scheme in 33 rural Upazillas aims to increase the use of maternal heathcare services by poor rural women. While the rural scheme is constrained by a lack of available providers, international experience suggests that an urban scheme would have considerable potential to use multiple providers to improve access and increase competition and quality. Other innovative health financing mechanisms that also offer considerable potential in urban settings include health insurance products for the working poor.

* 2008 Bangladesh Health Workforce Strategy, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of Bangladesh

** 2006 Bangladesh Urban Health Survey, NIPORT, MEASURE Evaluation, ICDDR,B, and ACPR

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Social Cohesion and Security

*Overview**

There is increasing international recognition of the complex nature of security and its interrelations with other dimensions of human development including social, political, economic and physical exclusion and inequality. A lack of security negatively affects living conditions of people of different social strata and in turn poor living conditions may aggravate levels of insecurity, i.e. increase crime and violence. Globally, between 1980 and 2000, violent crime increased by 30% from 2300 to over 3000 incidents per 100,000 persons and there is significant evidence that urban areas face particular challenges in terms of security. Data illustrates that 60% of all persons living in urban areas have been victims of crime over the past 5 years. Higher crime rates in cities may be linked to rapid urban growth, higher population densities, larger city sizes, poor urban design, and poor urban management.

Data on the relationship between rapid urbanization and crime rates in Latin America indicate that there is a higher probability of households becoming victims of crime if they are located in areas with high growth rates. The association of rapid urbanization and crime rates can be explained in a number of ways.

Rapid urbanization causes a high turnover of people as they move from one household to another. There is significant evidence that this phenomenon is positively correlated with higher crime rates. The fluctuation of people in rapidly growing cities negatively affects social cohesion and disrupts

informal social control mechanisms that previously impeded criminal behavior. Rapid urbanization also increases pressure on public authorities who may fail to respond to heightened safety and security demands, leading to unmet expectations and again increasing the risk that people become victims of crime. There is also evidence that suggests city size and crime rates are positively correlated, especially in developing countries. One of the reasons for this is that there is less per capita spending on law enforcement and also less community cooperation with the police. A third factor that may explain the higher prevalence of crime in cities is the urban environment. An urban environment that disables insecurity needs appropriate design and management. 10-15% of all crimes have environmental design and management components, which adds up to millions of incidents each year globally.

In addition to issues related specifically to urbanization and urban management, broader socio-economic factors such as poverty and inequality, demographics such as youthful population growth and political contexts are further important factors for explaining increasing crime and violence rates.

Poverty for instance can be seen as a 'survival strategy' for many urban dwellers. Unemployment and social exclusion have very negative impacts on crime and violence. In turn violence may further aggravate poverty since it leads to further reductions in social and physical capital. Many studies indicate however that income inequality measured by the Gini coefficient is an even more important factor for crime and violence than poverty and is strongly correlated with high homicide rates (Fajnzylber, 2002). There are also higher levels of crime victimization to be found in countries with higher inequality (UN-Habitat, 2007).

While fast growing cities in Asia and the Middle East report lower crime rates than other cities in the world (UN-Habitat, 2007), and there is still a rather high degree of social cohesion due to social and cultural factors (albeit lower in urban than in rural areas, Saferworld, 2008), the rapid pace of urbanization in Bangladesh and rising levels of inequality within the towns and cities of Bangladesh** leave no room for complacency. A recent study by the World Bank in four Dhaka slums found that levels of violence are serious and perceived to be increasing, with 93% of respondents having been affected by some sort of crime over the past 12 months (World Bank, 2007). Although the situation is especially severe for Dhaka, other cities of Bangladesh also experience high crime rates such as Dinajpur in which one in six households was affected by crime in the past 12 months (Garrett, 2004).

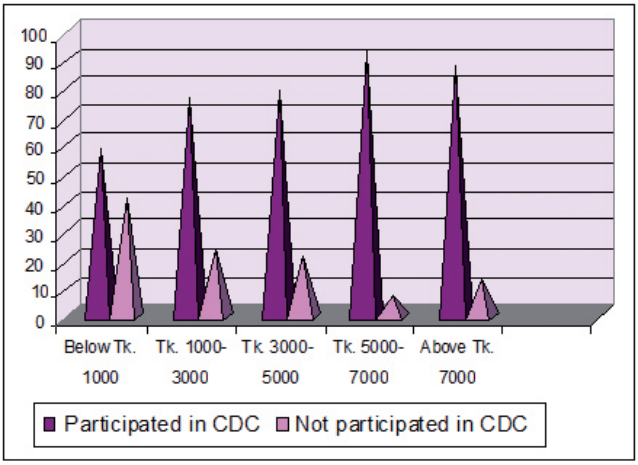
While crime and violence pose a threat for all social strata, data from the World Bank study confirms that, in common with global evidence, the poor are disproportionately affected by crime and violence (Garrett, 2004). The urban poor are more vulnerable to the effects of high levels of insecurity since they are less able to cope with the consequences of such occurrences than the rich. Furthermore, they are often residents of slums where there is a lack of basic infrastructure and service delivery, where the pace of rapid urbanization is felt most strongly and where there may be a lack of social

The poor are very vulnerable and, within this group, women are often the most vulnerable. As the map illustrates, the main challenge women in Rishipara face is education and illiteracy, followed by a high incidence of domestic violence and dowry issues. Location: Rishipara Slum Narayanganj, Source: UPRIS software GTZ, 2010

cohesion (Garrett, 2004)***. A major additional factor in Bangladesh is the high dependence of the urban poor on criminal mastaans (musclemen) who now control property rents and many basic services in the urban slums of Bangladesh. Slum residents who do not pay the money demanded for these services have to fear extortions, physical harm or evictions (WB, 2007). This corresponds to global evidence that higher demands in public services through rapid urbanization also generate criminal activities (UN-Habitat, 2007). Finally, in common with the rest of South Asia, Bangladesh has very high rates of gender based violence (ICDDR, B, 2006) and data suggests that physical abuse of wives was higher in slums. For example, in the 2006 Bangladesh Urban Health Survey 62% of women living in slums reported having been physically abused by their husbands (Bangladesh Urban Health Survey, 2006). The same percentage of men reported having physically assaulted their wives. A much lower proportion of women – 42% - in non-slum areas reported ever having been abused by their husbands.

Strengthening social cohesion and security requires concerted action at national and local levels in Bangladesh across many different fields. At the local level actions may include effective urban planning and governance as well as community based approaches and strengthening social capital. At the national level actions may include reforming prisons, tackling organized forms of crime (e.g.human trafficking), strengthening formal criminal justice systems and the police and rebuilding public confidence in these institutions. (UN-Habitat, WB, 2007)

Given the specific challenges faced by the country's towns and cities and the disproportionate effect on their most vulnerable members, it also true that a differentiated approach is needed for urban areas that seeks to address the particular needs of the urban poor.



Rishi Para Slum in Narayanganj:percentage of households participating in Community Development Committees (CDC) disaggregated by income.
The graph shows that households that belong to a higher income group tend to participate more in the CDC's.
Source: EMGPR factsheet, GTZ 2010

Key issue

Promoting community-based approaches to crime prevention would benefit all urban residents.

Access to justice for the urban poor is severely restricted in Bangladesh. The World Bank study found that 60% of crime and violence in 4 slums of Dhaka is not reported to anyone at all. Of the 40% of incidents that were reported, 16% were reported to community leaders, 18% to family members and only 3% to the police, reflecting the low level of trust in law enforcement agencies and the overall justice system of the urban poor in Dhaka. In 88% of the reported cases no action was taken. These findings are also supported by a UNDP report on urban poverty which concluded that Bangladesh's criminal justice system - including many of its laws - is anti-poor (UNDP, 2002). Access to justice for many poor people is limited due to the high costs involved in getting legal aid or going to court. The low level of responsiveness of the police to the concerns of the poor is also a major issue. Of 18 stakeholder 10 had to persuade or bribe the police to be able to file their case. Both the UNDP and World Bank study concluded that poor people prefer intervention of community leaders in times of conflict.

The World Bank report identified a number of policy responses to overcome crime and violence and to reduce the vulnerability of poor people including community based solutions to restore trust between communities and law enforcement agencies (WB, 2007). Alongside other important interventions - such as addressing anti-poor biases, ensuring timely judicial processes

and improving access to legal aid – community interventions have the potential to improve justice for the poor, for women and for other excluded and vulnerable groups. For example, the GTZ supported project Promotion of Legal and Social Empowerment of Women aims at providing women with legal equality (GTZ, 2009). One of the components of this project is community-based policing which supports disempowered victims, especially women, girls and the poor, by providing them with opportunities to voice their views. In this way, the community and the police can be brought together to resolve problems jointly, resulting in improved policing and justice for the poor.

* Data and analysis in first two paragraphs based on UN-Habitat (2007): Global Report of Human Settlements 2007: Enhancing Urban Safety and Security. United Nations Human Settlements Programme. Nairobi.

** Inequality has increased from 0.39 in 1981-82 to 0.42 in 2000 with a more unequal income distribution in urban areas as compared to rural areas. (Bangladesh Bureau Statistics: Statistics for Monitoring Attainment of MDGs in Bangladesh.)

*** It is important to note that not all slums have very high percentages of new migrants and levels of social cohesion will vary considerably depending on the context.

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Labour Markets

Overview

It is now widely recognised that urban centres within most developing economies are 'engines of growth' and sites of opportunity for those seeking to improve their livelihoods. Bangladesh is no different, with the labour force for Dhaka alone growing by 15% between 1996 and 2000, compared with 7% for the country as a whole (WB, 2007). The growing urban economy in Bangladesh relies on a large pool of informal labour, with the 2005 Labour Force Survey suggesting that as much as 74% of the urban workforce is in the informal sector (Maligalig, 2009).

From the export-orientated garment sector, to the market for domestic staff, to rickshaw drivers, labour is the most important asset for poor urban households.

It is through labour that these households benefit most from economic growth and many workers in these sectors have successfully capitalised on these opportunities and significantly improved their earned income. Not only does this mean improved livelihoods for many families but, given the high percentage of migrants in sectors such as the garment industry, the resulting flow of remittances also has important positive impacts on rural poverty.

However, while the opportunities are real, low wages, underemployment, unemployment and low skills mean that the reality for many of the urban poor is a continual struggle to meet their basic needs. In the 2000 Labour Force Survey, rates of unemployment in Dhaka were found to be twice as high among the urban poor as the non-poor, while underemployment affected 20% of households (WB, 2007). Households were also more likely to be poor when the head of the household worked in the informal sector, was a day labourer or transport or agriculture worker.

Exacerbating this situation, working conditions in the informal sector are often very poor, even for those in better paid garments jobs, significantly reducing the productive working lifespan; while casual workers are exposed to numerous risks that undermine the gains they have made by participating in urban labour markets.

The NSAPR II recognises the challenges facing the poor and underemployed in the urban informal sectors, but while it calls for increased access to productive employment and decent wages for informal workers, it does not contain any provision for specific policies or programmes (NSAPR-II, 2009).

Priority areas to support the NSAPR II in addressing the challenges it identifies in this area could therefore include:

- **identifying new areas for employment generation**
- **improving the skills of workers**
- **improving working conditions, especially in the informal sector**
- **increasing access to credit to enable an expansion of self-employment activities**

There is also potential scope for increasing employment opportunities for the poorest through labour intensive infrastructure programmes in poor urban settlements and facilitating increases in the labour force participation of poor women through access to government financed child care.

However, the existence of extremely poor households with severe capacity constraints – such as street-dwellers or households with chronically-ill or severely disabled members - means that increasing access to productive employment and self-employment opportunities alone will not be sufficient to ensure urban poverty reduction. Micro-credit, for example, has increasingly acknowledged limitations in reaching the extreme poor*. Further, the existence of high levels of child workers - 20% of households in the 2000 Labour Force Survey, providing one third of total income for the poorest households – requires different forms of intervention. Urban poverty reduction programmes that do not solely rely on employment and enterprise creation are therefore essential if the poorest households are to be reached.

Key issues

Improving labour standards for informal workers poor in urban Bangladesh would increase productivity.

Working conditions in the informal sector in Bangladesh are frequently very poor, with little or no formal labour standards in place to protect the well-being of workers. Even within semi-formal sectors such as the garments industry, long working hours and poor working conditions mean that garment work does not represent a long term livelihood option for poor women (Kabeer, 2003). In the fully informal sector, the conditions are even worse, with no effective working standards in place at all. This has a severe impact on the long-term productive capacity of the urban 'working poor'. For example, among rickshaws the initial economic returns for rickshaw pulling among recent migrants diminish significantly over time and long-term rickshaw pullers face chronic poverty and insecurity (Begum, 2004).

International evidence suggests that compliance with labour standards often accompanies improvements in productivity and economic performance (WB, 2005). Attempts to address the working conditions and labour standards of the working poor are therefore of considerable value and may have longer-term impacts on productivity. In the 'semi-formal' garment sector for example, the GTZ-supported project PROGRESS aims to improve the social compliance status of garment factories in Bangladesh to improve the working

and employment conditions of garment workers. In the short term this will contribute towards improving the image of the garment sector among overseas buyers and consumers, but in the long term it may have considerable impacts on worker retention and productivity. While tackling working standards in the informal sector itself is more of a challenge, international experience suggests it is also a feasible option, for example through training on occupational health and safety (ILO, 1999).

Labour intensive infrastructure development is as applicable in poor urban settlements as in rural areas.

There is extensive experience in Bangladesh of labour intensive infrastructure development in rural settings combing the objectives of improved infrastructure with employment and income generation for the poor. For example both the second Rural Infrastructure Improvement Programme and the Chars Livelihood Programme have demonstrated the multiple benefits of combining high quality community and public works programmes with well-designed employment and training opportunities for poor local residents. Although the majority of both national and international experience in this area is in rural settings, there is growing international consensus that these tools can be modified and successfully applied in urban settings (ILO, 2008). In Bangladesh, there is considerable potential to pilot new models of employment intensive infrastructure improvement during slum upgrading work and in other community infrastructure programmes.

Urban cash transfer programmes can have a positive impact on the labour market.

While the preferred option for the vast majority of poor households is to work their way out of poverty, there remain a significant proportion of poor households for whom this is not a feasible option. For example, the 'demographically' marginalised (e.g. the very young, very old or severely disabled) or the extreme poor who are trapped in a cycle of poverty and social exclusion. International experience suggests that for these people, targeted cash transfer programmes are an effective means of improving the well-being of the most vulnerable. There are, however, concerns that urban poverty 'safety net' programmes could reduce the incentive to work among the poor with a resulting knock-on effect on the labour market. However, international experience suggests otherwise. For example, a recent review of global evidence on the effects of social transfers (or 'safety nets') on labour supply (Barrientos, 2008), including evidence from rural safety net programmes in Bangladesh, concludes that while a reduction in the labour supply of children and older people can be observed, this is often compensated for by changes in the labour supply of other household members – for example, by lifting credit and care constraints. Given the absence of any 'safety net' programmes

specifically targeted at urban areas, properly designed and implemented cash transfer programmes therefore represent a means of addressing chronic and extreme poverty in urban areas while potentially freeing up members of the household of working age to seek productive employment.

* See, for example, ADB, 2000, 'Addressing Poverty in Bangladesh,' Asian Development Bank Working Paper

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Urban Municipal Governance

Overview

Urban governance can be defined as the exercise of political, economic, social, and administrative authority in the management of a city's affairs. It comprises the complex "mechanisms, processes, relationships and institutions through which citizens and groups articulate their interests, exercise their legal rights, meet their obligations and mediate their difference." (UNDP, 1997) While governance itself is a neutral term, good urban governance is characterized by participation, transparency, accountability, rule of law, effectiveness and equity. In order to establish good governance at local government level it is important that members are elected; that there are enough resources and power to allow government to act; that channels exist to allow civil society to influence and participate in developing policies and programmes and that the laws to protect the informal sector and the housing rights of low-income populations are in place. (Satterthwaite, 2009)

In common with many developing countries, most municipalities and City Corporations in Bangladesh have very limited financial and human resources combined with inadequate governance capacities. Elected mayors have a rather authoritative position, dominating decision-making on every aspect of City Corporation and Pourashava management, while the small number of elected ward commissioners with relatively large constituencies does not help broader democratic representation and participation processes. This is further compounded by the limited powers and resources of local government that, despite their constitutional independence, makes them in reality largely dependent on national government resource allocations. This lack of autonomy in formulating or implementing development plans prevents the City Corporations and Pourashavas from making any decisions without consulting the Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development and Cooperatives (MoLGRD&C), significantly slowing down decision making.

While all urban residents are affected by poorly governed cities it is the urban poor who are most vulnerable to its consequences. This is because they rely more heavily on public services than richer residents, have access to fewer means to address grievances (through both official and informal channels) and are most likely to be negatively affected by planning decisions taken without adequate consultation or participation. The marginalization of the poor in the decision making process further exacerbates their lack of access to productive livelihoods and the poor quality of public service delivery worsens the vicious cycle of social and economic disempowerment. The condition of women, children, the elderly and the disabled amongst the poor is particularly vulnerable. Improvements in urban services for the poor require joint planning, implementation, monitoring, and maintenance of urban services by various stakeholders including the urban poor, municipal officials, and elected representatives of the municipality. However, given the very

limited participation of the poor in urban governance in Bangladesh at present, considerable efforts are necessary to empower the poor to participate effectively in decision-making processes and to increase the capacity of municipal governance to implement pro-poor participatory planning and management approaches.

A number of projects have been – or are being - implemented in Bangladesh that deliver services to urban poor communities. In 1982 UNICEF's Slum Improvement Project (SIP) began followed later by the Urban Basic Services Delivery Project. Both aimed to improve the delivery of a set of critical basic services to the poor through the establishment of Urban Development Centres (UDC) in poor settlements. They sought to encourage participation at the grass roots level as well as to build up the capacity of the local government so that they could provide services to the poor efficiently. From the 1990's onwards the World Bank supported Municipal Services Project (MSP) and the Asian Development Bank (ADB) supported Urban Governance and Infrastructure Improvement Project (UGIIP 1) also sought to improve urban management in a variety of different ways. Among the most important lessons learned from these two projects was that physical infrastructure improvements cannot be sustained unless persistent governance problems are addressed and they confirmed that the inclusion of the urban poor in municipal governance needs better understanding among municipal officials and other key stakeholders. In addition, it was found that different urban poverty reduction schemes – such as slum-upgrading and poverty reduction action plans within flagship projects like Local Partnership for Urban Poverty Alleviation Programme (LPUPAP) and UGIIP 1 – included a very limited number of urban poor compared with real needs and demand. Further, in many cases, cities were incorporated into a governance reform process

without having a poverty expert in the municipality. Without sufficient and relevant professionals on board, many Pourashavas struggled to adopt and execute pro-poor interventions and to continue working with urban poor communities after the expiry of the projects.

Despite these challenges, recent innovations to improve urban governance include:

• The Second Urban Governance and Infrastructure Improvement Project (UGIIP-2) implemented by the Local Government Engineering Department and supported by GoB, ADB, KfW, and GTZ. This project, among other things, is supporting 35 Pourashavas to prepare Pourashava Development Plans, establish Ward and Town Level Coordination Committees (TLCCs), deploy a Slum Improvement Officer (as introduced by the 2008 Pourashava Ordinance) and spend at least of their 5% budget allocation exclusively for the urban poor under a comprehensive Poverty Reduction Action Plan (PRAP). The performance-based allocation of investment funds in the project creates a strong incentive for Pourashavas to reform their governance, and the improved governance ensures the effectiveness and sustainability of the capital investments.

• The Urban Poverty Programme (officially the 'Urban Partnerships for Poverty Reduction Project, or UPPR), executed by LGED, and supported by DFID and UNDP. This programme, among other things, is supporting municipalities and communities in 23 towns/cities, eventually expanding to 30 towns/cities, to: identify and assess low income settlements; mobilize households and form community groups at the local, neighborhood, ward and city levels; identify problems and prepare community action plans; prepare and manage community contracts for physical infrastructure improvements and to increase incomes and assets.

• Narayanganj Pourashava has undertaken a participatory poverty mapping exercise designed to help inform Pourashava planning and decision making through the GTZ-supported project Enhancing Municipal Governance for Poverty Reduction. Important lessons have also been learned from these interventions. For

example, community group formation and mobilization or representation of the poor in TLCCs and ward committees does not necessarily enable the poor to participate actively in decision-making processes in the committees.

As a result, while UGIIP 2 municipalities are supposed to develop municipal development plans and urban master plans, these will require the development of significant skills on the part of TLCC members and municipal officials in participatory and pro-poor urban governance. However, given the findings from the projects discussed above, it is crucial that the reform process is implemented in such a way that the poor are adequately represented and supported.

In conclusion, despite the considerable challenges that still exist, it is highly encouraging that Bangladesh has recognized the importance of urban governance improvement. The NSAPR II contains a welcome list of goals for improving local governance (NSAPR-II, 2009) **– although urban municipal governance is not given any specific attention within the document - and interventions are now focusing greater attention on governance reform to enable municipalities to work more efficiently. However, efforts should be taken to work on improving effective participation in planning processes for the urban poor in municipal development in general, and active engagement in the maintenance of community facilities in particular (with the provision of adequate operations and maintenance costs). The NSAPR II sets out comprehensive goals at every level to target poverty reduction. There is an opportunity to support these important national over-arching goals by issuing specific instructions relating to the preparation and implementation of poverty reduction at the municipal level.**

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Land Tenure and Security

Overview

There is a long history of informal settlement in Bangladesh. During the Mughal period, temporary camps with free food and shelter for destitute people existed, referred to as 'Longorkhana'. However, it was during the partition of the sub-continent in 1947 that the slum population first began to increase significantly as the Pakistani government struggled to provide accommodation for millions of Muslim refugees who migrated to the cities of East Pakistan. After the liberation of Bangladesh in 1971, the problem became even more severe, amplified by repeated natural calamities in the country. Over this period, rural to urban migration became the dominant driver of urban population growth (UPPR, 2009). Large numbers of these 'urban newcomers' started squatting on government owned vacant land like the road reserves, railway stations and sides of railway tracks, launch terminals and market places (Roy, 2005).

In 2005, a major mapping and census exercise of the slums of the six City Corporations in Bangladesh found that a total of 5.4 million people were living in 9048 slum settlements*. About 55% of these slums were in Dhaka where the slum population has grown from 1.5 million people in 3007 clusters of slums in in 1996, to 3.4 million people in 4996 clusters in 2006. While the overall population of Dhaka is growing at the rate of 4.5-5.0% (UN-Habitat, 2008-9), the slum population is growing at the rate of more than 10%, despite occupying only 4% of the city's total metropolitan area. Bangladesh already has the highest population density in the world (2600 persons per square mile) but the population density in slums is roughly 200 times greater than average. This is an even more astonishing number when one considers that the slums are dominated by single storey structures. The density of slums is 8 to 10 times higher than that of the city population as a whole which is around 891 per acre (Nazrul, 2009) and it is generally higher in slums located on public land.

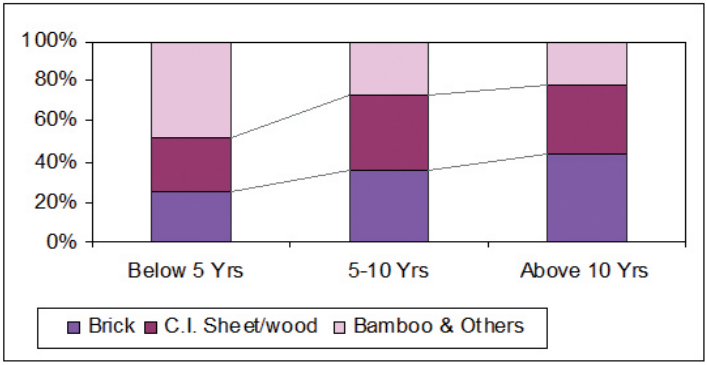

Figure: Depicting the material for construction related to the duration of living in the slum. From the bar graphs the relation is made clear that the longer people reside in the area, the more is invested in better materials for construction, like bricks. Source: EMGPR factsheet, GTZ 2010

Despite the enormous social and political changes that occurred during the 19th and 20th Century in Bangladesh, the legal framework for accessing land, protecting title and any kind of land transfer is still contained in the Transfer of Property Act from 1882 and the Registration Act of 1908. The most significant law dealing with tenancy is the Non-agricultural Tenancy Act of 1949 and for urban areas, land use is regulated by the Town Improvement Act of 1953 and the Pourashava Ordinance of 1977 (LPUPAP, 2007). The National Housing Policy was also formed in 1993 but has never been consistently applied and implemented.

The out-dated state of the law contributes towards the exclusion of the indigenous urban poor, migrants and landless from the opportunity to access decent shelter. However, just as important is the state of the property market and the price of land in Bangladesh. While land prices vary across different towns and cities, the price of residential land in urban areas is consistently high. In Dhaka, there are locations where the cost of land per square foot is more than 150US$ (CUS Bulletin, 2007). The consequence is that the urban poor cannot afford to purchase private land. As a result, in Dhaka, 57% of the population do not own land, whilst 4% own as much as 28% of the city's land. Seen another way, 2% (the upper income group) use about 15% of the land, another 28% (the middle income group) about 65% and the remaining 70% about 20% of the residential land." (LPUPAP, 2007)

The only means of access to land by the urban poor is therefore through a tenancy or the illegal occupation of unused private- or Government-owned land. The 2005 CUS slum census found that most slums (89%) occupied privately-owned land (CUS, 2005), many of them with no formal written tenancy agreements. Similarly, the Local Partnerships for Urban Poverty Alleviation Program (LPUPAP) identified as many as fourteen categories of land tenure, ranging from 'fully illegal' occupants such as street dwellers to squatter tenants, lease holders and 'fully legal' individual owners. However, contrary to the perception that there is a lack of available land in urban areas, the final report of LPUPAP notes there are large tracts of un-used or under-used 'khas' land holdings within Pourashavas and their peripheries. A further crucial point is that legality is not necessarily correlated with the

length of residency. An IFPRI study in Tongi and Jessore found that 70% of slum dwellers had occupied their land for over ten years (IFPRI, 2003); 40% of the slums in the six city corporations surveyed by CUS in 2005 had been established before 1981 (CUS, 2005); and a study conducted by Narayanganj Pourashava in collaboration with the Enhancing Municipal Governance for Poverty Reduction Project (GTZ) found that many households had occupied their property for generations (one area was over 173 years old). However, despite sometimes occupying their land for many decades, these households continue to lack official documents protecting their rights.

Given the situation outlined above, the recognition of the insecure land tenure of slum dwellers in the NSAPR II is welcome as is the commitment to provide housing for both the urban and rural poor (NSAPR-II, 2009). However, as will be discussed in greater detail below, it is crucial that any such programmes include effective mechanisms to ensure the active participation of poor communities in their planning and implementation to prevent the poorest households from being further marginalized by the process.

Key issues

Improving security of land tenure for the urban poor would generate new income streams for government and private land owners and agencies.

Secure tenure is a critical factor in poverty alleviation which reduces households' vulnerability to shocks and enables easy access to basic infrastructure, employment and financial institutions. It represents a key asset for low-income communities, which impacts not only on the livelihood standards of the directly affected urban poor (1) but it also has the potential to contribute to a general improvement in the welfare of the local community as well (2).

(1) Poor urban residents are in constant fear of eviction. According to CUS's 2005 study, around 7% of residents in slums in the six city corporations had either been evicted at least once from their present location or were facing an acute threat of eviction (CUS, 2005). Further, insecure tenure is an often exclusion criteria for development programmes which prevents the installation of essential public services and discourages any investments in improving the local environment. As a result, in 2005, only 10% of slums in the six city corporations had sufficient drainage to avoid water-logging during heavy rains, and less than 1% of slum structures were made of materials that could be considered high quality. International evidence shows that if poor communities feel that a genuine agreement on their land security has been reached, they are more likely to operate to their maximum potential and are able to manage the improvement of their houses and surrounding areas by themselves (CODI, 2007).

(2) People living in slums are excluded from society and local and central government are denied the revenue from property taxes and service charges which could help to improve urban living environments and stimulate local and external investments. Furthermore, even if slum dwellers are mostly perceived as illegal occupiers, their dwelling is far from being free. According to the CUS study, almost 80% of the households of the surveyed settlements were paying rent, frequently to local mastaans, even though the land belonged neither to the group of gang leaders nor to the inhabitants. Legalizing these settlements – or negotiating an alternative form of longer term security such as an 'agreement not to evict' - could allow private or governmental landowners to earn this revenue, while at the same time easing the demands on the poor, currently paying extortionate rates. "In comparison to services accessed legally, these informal channels involve significantly higher costs." (BUET, 2007)

Local Government and poor communities can take a lead role in developing sustainable housing solutions.

There are a growing number of examples from a diverse range of Asian countries - such as India, the Philippines, Thailand, Sri Lanka and Indonesia - of groups of the urban poor negotiating with local government to reach agreements on land, site and service improvement or land tenure (Satterthwaite, 2009). Despite considerable economic and political difficulties, these examples demonstrate that once communities organise they can begin a dialogue with government through federations of the urban poor to lobby for land and housing rights. Government can play an active role in encouraging such ventures. For example, in Thailand, the government launched the Baan Mankong Programme in 2003 to address the housing problems of the country poorest citizens. This programme, which is being implemented by the Community Organizations Development Institute (a public institute under the Ministry of Social Development and Human Security), supports poor communities to work in close collaboration with local government and other key stakeholders to survey all the communities and plan an upgrade process to improve all the poor communities in the city. However, while these examples of success are encouraging, experience also shows that it is important to recognise that different policies and approaches have different advantages and disadvantages, and will tend to favour particular groups among the 'urban poor'. For the lowest income households who rent their property, it is important to ensure that improvements in the area do not lead to unsustainable rents or their replacement with better-off tenants. As low-income households need support to manage the market, improvements are therefore often best organised through collective organisations, possibly with some form of micro-finance available for further improvements by (slightly) better-off households.

In Bangladesh, there is considerable potential for a dialogue between local government, NGOs and community groups to develop low-cost housing for urban poor communities. For example, GTZ and Habitat for Humanity are supporting discussions with a number of Pourashavas who are considering approaching national government to seek permission to lease land to poor communities in their municipalities. In this way a model can be developed that sustainably addresses the needs of the most vulnerable and poorest slums dwellers in cities who have traditionally been neglected by urban development programmes wary of protracted legal battles over land tenure. Another promising development is the recognition by the Urban Partnership for Poverty Reduction (UPPR) programme of the importance of respecting formal and informal tenure of poor households and communities to effective community mobilisation and partnerships with local government that meet the needs of the most vulnerable. UPPR is therefore placing more emphasis upon extremely poor communities and vulnerable groups as it attempts to create space within the project for improving the living environments of households living in the least secure communities.

* Except where stated, all figures in this paragraph are from Centre for Urban Studies, Slums of Urban Bangladesh, Mapping and Census 2005

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Environment

Overview

Challenges for the urban environment are in the forms of water and air pollution, land degradation, extreme degradation of terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems, unsustainable agricultural practices and unplanned urban growth. To attain environmental sustainability a comprehensive approach to the management of resources and the urban ecosystem is necessary, which also includes an emphasis on social inclusion. There is a direct link between urban poverty and the exposure to environmental hazards. Bad environmental conditions affect health and livihoods.

These linkages between environmental degradation and poverty are explicitly recognized in the National Strategy for Accelerated Poverty Reduction, which emphasizes both the dependency of the poor on natural resources, and the vulnerability of the poor to environmental health risks (NSAPR-II, 2009).

There is the further challenge of overcoming weak environmental governance. Climate change has compounded problems of environmental degradation and has led to serious deterioration of ecosystems, adding yet another dimension to poverty. While recognizing that economic growth is essential to reduce poverty, the Strategy states that the aim is, "to achieve poverty-free environmental sustainability in Bangladesh, that is, to meet the needs of current and future generations by ensuring environmental friendly development." (NSAPR-II, 2009).

All urban residents are affected by deteriorating environmental conditions. However, poverty and urban environmental degradation are closely correlated and the poor are disproportionately affected by the consequences of a badly managed environment.

Whether they live in slums or smaller 'poverty pockets', the homes and workplaces of urban poor are frequently in unhygienic and vulnerable locations with inadequate services (Moral, 2008). Poverty creates environmental degradation and vice versa. Slums are often located in sites prone to natural disasters such as flooding which expose residents to health hazards that reduce their savings and productivity. Due to insufficient services they pollute the local environment by illegal dumping of wastes and discharging of wastewater (Moral, 2008).

Given the vulnerability of Bangladesh to climate change and variability – with urban environments also facing increasing environmental risks that will affect water systems, housing and settlements, transport networks, utilities, and industry – these problems will only become more severe without proper environmental management.

Once again, it is the poor who will be most affected by climate change and climate variability, with the increased prevalence of diseases, flooding and other risks heightening their vulnerability and constraining their economic activities (Huraera, 2009).

Water and sanitation are particularly crucial dimensions of environmental management in urban settings. To remain healthy, human beings need an adequate, year-round supply of high-quality water. Many debilitating or even fatal illnesses are spread by contamination of the water supply with human fecal matter containing disease-causing viruses, bacteria, and parasites. Women are particularly affected by a lack of adequate water supply given that the burden of securing access to and fetching clean water usually falls on them. In addition, there is a high opportunity cost to the lack of safe water. Again, women and children are among the most vulnerable to these risks because children are more likely to become ill and women are the primary caregivers for ill family members (Moral, 2008).

However, infrastructure alone will not result in improved health. It is necessary to integrate provision of water supply and sanitation facilities with hygiene promotion activities to ensure sustainability of the infrastructure and hygienic behavior to reduce waterborne diseases. Other major issues in poor urban settlements include improper solid waste management, drainage congestion and vulnerable housing. While land tenure and other factors frequently make environmental management a challenging task in these settings, it is possible to address many issues by supporting poor people to address their own concerns through the creation of jobs. For example, in relation to solid waste management it is possible to involve the poor in the promotion of waste collection and separation at source (Moral, 2008). In this way, income generation to reduce poverty can be combined with improvements to the local environment.

In its efforts to meet these challenges, the Government of Bangladesh has undertaken a number of different initiatives to provide services to the urban poor. Interventions in the water supply and sanitation sectors first began 60 years ago and after Independence, the Government emphasised the rehabilitation of damaged water supplies, and sanitation services. The installation of new facilities in rural and urban areas was also provided for

through the Department of Public Health Engineering (DPHE). Services were mostly provided free of charge and the role of users in decision-making, cost sharing, operations and maintenance was negligible. The responsibility for installation, operation and maintenance of urban water supplies (with the exception of Dhaka, Narayanganj, Chittagong and Khulna) is now shared between the Pourashavas and DPHE.

Recent project-based activities in these municipalities and their involvement in planning, implementation and management have had a positive impact on the capacity of the Pourashavas, which now have Water Supply and Sanitation Committees (WATSAN) where communities are included for supervising water and sanitation related activities. In addition to DPHE, the Local Government Engineering Department (LGED) is also involved in the planning and implementation of water and sanitation services in certain Pourashavas under selected projects identified by the Planning Commission. In 1983, the Water Supply and Sewerage Authorities (WASA) were established in Dhaka and Chittagong. In Khulna, the WASA was established in 2008. Therefore the responsibility for water supply, sewerage and drainage in Dhaka; and water supply in Chittagong and Khulna now rests with the respective WASAs. In 1990, Narayanganj town was also brought under the jurisdiction of Dhaka WASA. The City Corporations and Pourashavas are also responsible for solid waste collection, disposal and their management, while WASAs or – in their absence – the respective City Corporations and Pourashavas are responsible for sewerage and storm water drainage systems in coordination with Water Development Board (Water and Sanitation Policy, 1998).

Key issues

Improving access to water and sanitation for the urban poor will positively impact on health and productivity.

Unsafe water, lack of sanitation facilities and poor hygiene practices are the direct roots of a number of health problems, which lead to a series of socio-economic problems. Most of these factors affect the urban poor in terms of general hardship, ill-health and even death. This consequently also adversely affects labour productivity and thus increases the vulnerability of the poor, keeping them in the vicious circle of poverty. Diarrhoea and other water and sanitation related diseases also cause children to miss days from school, which means they must struggle to catch up and in the worst case drop out altogether. Currently, about half of all children do not complete primary school (SSR, 2008)*. As noted above, women usually shoulder the burden of sourcing clean water as well being the most affected by the consequences of family ill-health.

A recent study (Baseline Survey, 2009) conducted by Human Development Research Centre (HDRC) as part of the urban component of the GoB-UNICEF Water and Sanitation Project reveals the following health related issues among the urban poor of 19 municipalities in Bangladesh:**

About 58 percent of the respondents have reported water-sanitation-hygiene related diseases in their households during a three months period preceding the survey. The incidences of water-sanitation-hygiene related diseases comprised 75 per cent of all disease incidences. About 36 per cent of the deaths during two years preceding the survey were contributed to water-sanitation-hygiene related diseases. The number of workdays lost per household due to water-sanitation-hygiene related diseases was estimated to be 12 days over a three months period, equivalent to around 7% of the urban poor's income. The total cost of treatment per household again over a three month period preceding the survey - is estimated to be Tk.573 (around 4% of monthly income), with Tk. 288 due to water- sanitation-hygiene related diseases.

Despite the fact that the poor are supposed to benefit most from Government services, this is not always the case. Slum dwellers in Dhaka reported paying Tk. 2 per bucket of water (20 litres), 23 times the price paid by those who had legal, piped connections (Tk. 4.33 per 1,000 litres; WB, 2002). In addition, the poor have to invest in containers to store water. In many cases 15 to 40 families collect water from one source, adding waiting times to the household chores and sometimes creating social tensions. In addition, the quantity of water the poor get is also insufficient. A family is usually able (both in terms of time and money) to collect two pitchers (40 litres) per day which is used for the drinking and other household needs of about five people. This is far below the GOB basic service level for water supply of 20 litres per capita per day. Often the supply is intermittent with the water only

available at dawn and night. Distribution systems are also hampered by frequent failures of electricity. Collection from shared/public sources may lead to contamination.

Findings of the above mentioned baseline survey reveals that – even in urban areas - most people (79%) use shallow tube-wells and 41% are not tested for arsenic. Only 10% of the households have access to municipal piped water. Households have to carry water for household consumption and different purposes from an average distance of 156 feet. Only 40% of the households individually or jointly own the water source. Regardless of the purpose of use, the average total time spent per day for collection of water per household is 25 minutes.

About 36% of urban poor households use improved individual latrines; while a larger part of the population (48%) have an improved shared latrine. Shared latrines can be a solution for crowded areas; however, cleanliness, maintenance and safe access – especially at night – can be problematic. People from 11% of the households reported practicing open defecation.

Solid waste was observed to be thrown at any open place by around 45% households. In about 26% of households, garbage is thrown into a drain. The better option of disposing of garbage into a pit is practiced by 24 % of households. In around 54% of the households, disposal of liquid wastes into pit/canal appeared to be in practice.

Community based, demand responsive approaches will help to derive sustainable benefits of water and sanitation facilities.

If the health benefits of sanitation are to be fully realised, good hygiene practices such as the use of sanitary facilities, safe handling and storage of water and hand washing at critical times are crucial. In addition, water and sanitation facilities will only continue functioning in the long run if sustainable systems for operation and maintenance are in place. From global experience, community based, demand responsive approaches are found to be most successful in achieving both behaviour change and community ownership and responsibility for water and sanitation facilities. However, for the urban poor, this is again a challenging proposition compared to the rural context. Issues like the temporary or illegal nature of their housing and the opportunity cost

for participating in community meetings etc., are impediments for the community to take an active role.

It is therefore no surprise that as part of the urban baseline survey, it has been observed that in 38% cases the tube-well and its surrounding areas are not clean. In 21% cases waste water around tube well has been observed and about 21% tube-wells platforms are cracked/ broken. Similarly for sanitation, only 14 per cent of latrines are rated 'Good/Very good/Clean'. Faeces are seen in the pan of latrines in 43 per cent of households and around the platforms of latrines in 8 per cent of the cases.

In most of the community/shared latrines, there is no water available inside the latrine and if water is available, it is generally not adequate. Therefore, latrines cannot be cleaned properly after every use, making the latrines very unattractive to use. The burden of latrine cleaning mainly (85%) falls on women, a hard task in conditions where water supply is inadequate.

Although hygiene knowledge level is relatively high (for instance around 70 per cent respondents know that both hands should be washed with water and soap/ash after defecation), the observed behaviour of hand washing is pretty low: only 1% before eating and preparing food, 13% after cleaning children's bottom. Especially in congested slum areas, menstrual hygiene is a problem for many adolescent girls and women, who lack the privacy to properly wash and dry menstrual rags, leading to infections. Women's involvement in the planning and decision making around water and sanitation issues is therefore of paramount importance.

In summary, improving the water and sanitation situation for the urban poor is not a matter of construction of facilities alone. The challenge lies in the establishment of sustainable systems for operation and maintenance and changing (hygiene) behaviours. However, context is crucial and there is no single model that will meet the needs of every poor urban community. For example, while free public services are obviously desirable if possible, international experience – for example in the Orangi Pilot Project in Pakistan – suggests that given the direct and indirects costs involved in lobbying for public provision this may not always be an effective strategy to increase access. Rather, if secure tenure and some form of direct ownership of facilities can be established, community-managed sanitation services can be highly effective. However, what is clear in almost all cases is that no solution will be possible without communities, local and national government, private sector and development partners joining forces in a constructive way.

* Survival rate to grade five is 51.9% in GPS, RNGPS and experimental schools.

** Although the study focuses mainly the urban slums or slum like areas covering more than 6000 households, the findings of the study in fact depict the real picture of water and sanitation situation in the poverty prone urban areas of Bangladesh.

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Education

Overview

Education plays a key role in poverty reduction and social development. The linkages between education and poverty can be understood in two main ways:

• Investment in education as a poverty reduction strategy which can enhance skills and productivity among poor households

• Poverty as a constraint to educational achievement (i.e. children of poor households receive less education).

The Constitution of Bangladesh identifies education as one of the fundamental rights of the country's citizens and the Government of Bangladesh (GoB) has on many occasions committed itself to fulfilling this pledge. Important milestones include the National Plan of Action for Education for All, formulated following the Education for All Conference in 1990, and the National Plan of Action for Children (for 1997 to 2002), prepared by Bangladesh as signatory of The Convention on the Rights of the Child. The draft National Policy on Child Labour also recognizes the importance of primary education and skill training as a major strategy towards the achievement of these goals (UNICEF, p.4, 2004), while the NSAPR II places considerable emphasis on the importance of improving the country's educational system (NSAAPR-II, p.49, 2009).

In urban settings, physical proximity to schools and other educational facilities does not necessarily mean that the poor have adequate access to such services as the number of schools may be inadequate for the density of population, schools may not be located in poor areas and costs (both direct and indirect) may be too high. Further, a reliance on cash income, the higher cost of living in urban areas and the greater availability of income opportunities may result in greater pressures on households to send children to work (Begum, 2005). While this may serve to meet the short term needs of households, it reduces investment in the development of human capital with often severe consequences on the long term earning potential of family members.

A UNICEF Situation Analysis in 2009 found that "Population growth and urbanization directly influence the realization of children's rights. The populations of the cities and towns of Bangladesh are growing rapidly from both natural population increases and the flow of people from rural areas in search of jobs. This process places enormous strain on the capacity of the Government, city corporations, municipalities, and NGOs to provide the services needed to protect the rights of the urban poor—including children's rights to health, nutrition, education, water and sanitation, and housing. Historically, most development programmes and projects in Bangladesh have focused on rural areas. Urban planning has been minimal, and the policy agenda has largely neglected the burgeoning urban slums and the urban poor."

In terms of education, though the opportunities for children are in general similar to rural areas, the situation in urban slums is even bleaker than the national average. Education providers in Bangladesh include governmental, NGO, religious, community and private schools. The largest proportions of children in poor household who go to school in urban areas attend government schools, followed by private schools and NGO schools. However, the attendance rate in urban slums is 27 percent lower than that of the national average (Multiple Indicator cluster survey 2006) and about 24 percent of girls living in slums never enrol in any formal or non-formal school. In a sample of slum areas in Dhaka, it was found that 58 percent of 6-7 years old do not attend school (Aparajejyo, 2002). Many of these out of school children are becoming working children resulting in high levels of child labour. In addition government data indicate that the average number of students per classroom in the Government primary schools of 17 large urban cities exceeded 100 in 2007, with negative effects on the overall quality of education (UNICEF, 2009).

In addition to the provision of formal schooling, the GoB has also developed strategies within the Millenium Development Goal and EFA Framework (Goals, 2, 3, and 6) which utilise Non-Formal Education (NFE) approaches. These include the Basic Education for Hard to Reach Urban Working Children (BEHTRUWC) project under the Ministry of Primary Education and the Hazardous Child Labour project under the Ministry of Labour and Employment, both of which are currently being implemented by the GoB. The BEHTRUWC project is designed to provide basic education to out of school working children in six urban cities. It has targeted 200,000 children aged 10-14. The Hazardous project is working in four major cities targeting around 50,000 children working in hazardous condition. Both the projects are being implemented in partnership with NGOs.

Amongst the large number of existing NGOs programmes, BRAC, Dhaka Ahsania Mission (DAM) and Plan Bangladesh provide the most notable programs in urban areas. Each of these programs has unique features. BRAC is running the biggest urban education program covering pre-primary, primary adolescent and continuing education for around 125,000 children in low income areas. The children who graduate from the BRAC primary education program reach a level equivalent to grade V, giving them considerable scope to move into mainstream education. The Dhaka Ahsania Mission (DAM) education program includes a) basic and continuing education for the urban poor; b) technical and vocational training for poor urban adolescents; and c) education, skill training and support for gainful employment to support the elimination of the worst forms of child labour. Finally, Plan Bangladesh is mostly implementing early childhood development programs, primary education programs, functional education for domestic children and technical education in urban areas of Dhaka. Within its extensive Early Childhood Care and Development Programme, PLAN Bangladesh has also established Day Care Centres in Dhaka Slums.

Among projects supported by development partners in Bangladesh: the ILO and the Ministry of Labour and Employment are currently running the Urban Informal Economy project for 30,000 children in selected cities; the Department of Social Service under the Ministry of Welfare has implemented a project for socially disadvantaged women and children, especially sex workers; and the Ministry of Women and Children Affairs implemented a Child Trafficking project to rescue and rehabilitate trafficked children and to raise awareness about the issue.

However, despite the important achievements of many of these programmes, formal services in urban areas remain insufficient and Non-Formal Education programmes are poorly coordinated with inadequate standardization to improve the scope for mainstreaming. This is exacerbated by the absence of explicit policies on urbanisation, urban poverty and urban education. Policy guidance and political commitment are therefore essential if the major problems facing the urban education system are to be addressed, including:

- **Public education facilities in urban are limited and the situation is acute in slum areas. The Government has not built any primary school in recent years in any of the six divisional cities and slums are particularly poorly served because they are considered illegal settlements so no-one - including government departments - is willing to build schools.**

- **The school stipend is not provided to poor urban children which is a missed opportunity to improve the poor rates of attendance.**

- **NFE services have no equivalency and accreditation with formal education limiting the scope to mainstream and sustain the benefit of education.**

- **The teacher student ratio is, in general, extremely high.**

- **Low income quintiles are not able to bear the opportunity cost to enrol children in private schools.**

Key issue

Improving urban education will improve human capital development with long term benefits for poor households and society as a whole.

As the NSAPR II acknowledges, only sustained improvements at every level of the country's education system will establish a truly empowered, knowledge-based society to meet the challenges of the 21st century and contribute to national poverty reduction. However, given the growing pace of urbanization, to achieve improvements of this scale it is necessary to prioritize urban issues within the national agenda, ideally within the framework of an urban education policy. Such a policy could include the following components:

1. Commitments to: a) increasing access and quality of education in urban cities based on school mapping, construction of new schools, and upgrading of existing schools; b) gap analysis on non-formal education provisions for hard-to-reach children (access, quality, relevance); c) resource mobilisation – government budget, and development budget; d) deployment of trained teachers.

2. With regard to improving access, options include:

• A component under the Primary Education Development Plan (III) to plan and coordinate urban issues

• Since the cost of land is crucial in urban areas, low cost temporary schools could be established in the urban slums. These could be used as multipurpose centres for other social interventions for the urban poor

• Maximising access in non-slum schools. It might be possible to develop multi-storied school buildings, partnerships with private schools, flexible school times etc.

3. Developing incentive packages for children in poverty:

• The Government of Bangladesh has a stipend and scholarship policy to support children in the poverty which has not to-date included urban slums. It should be extended to children living in slums.

• The World Food Program could start the school feeding program in urban areas.

4. Coordination both amongst Government bodies and between Government and other development partners should be strengthened:

• To improve the urban scenario and reduce poverty, Government should improve coordination between Ministries (LGRD, Education, Labour, Children and Women Welfare, Health etc). In addition, City Corporations and Pourashavas should be better resourced. Coordination between government, civil society and development partners in urban planning and implementation should be improved by facilitating transparent information exchange.

5. Establish equivalency, accreditation and coordination between the formal and non-formal education system:

• It is evident that non-formal education is the major means of reaching urban children who have dropped out of school. The NGO programs currently available do not share the same standards and are not coordinated with, or equivalent to, the formal education system. This is hampering the sustainability of non-formal education and mainstreaming of children graduating from these programmes. All these programs should therefore be standardized and made equivalent to basic formal education as proposed in the new education policy.

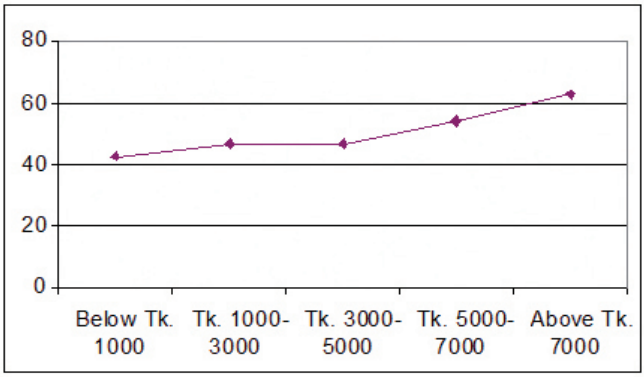
• To achieve this, better coordination and functioning of the Directorate of Primary Education (DPE) and the Bureau of Non Formal Education (BNFE) will be necessary.

6. Prioritize early intervention (i.e. early childhood education (under 6) and children in ages 6-10):

• Considering the sustained effect of Early Childhood Care for Development and the importance of education for children in ages 6-10, it is necessary to prioritize these two programs. Government, NGOs and donors should plan a comprehensive program to address the needs of these age groups with special slum programmes targeting the poorest communities in Bangladesh's cities.

7. Inclusive education: child friendly schools and retention (pre-primary, primary and secondary):

• Access to education for poor urban children has to be addressed within the context of the wider education system. The high drop-out rate is a direct consequence of the low quality of education. Children who drop-out from primary schools are at high risk of becoming labourers and/or being trapped in the vicious cycle of poverty. In this light, improving the quality of formal education in terms of inclusiveness is crucial. Keeping children at risk of dropping out from doing is an objective of existing programs, such as the Primary Education Development Programme II. However, existing programs do not seem to address this problem effectively.



Income group: Depicts the relation between the percentage of school going children and the income group of household head, showing that the higher the income the better the opportunities to acquire some kind of education. Source: EMGPR factsheet, GTZ 2010

8. There is significant potential to integrate education programmes with other initiatives and develop partnerships with specialised agencies. For example, the following programmes could be integrated with education programmes to support poor children and their families:

- Community integrated development programmes run by NGOs
- Micro-credit/ income generating programmes
- Vocational and adult skills development

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Extreme Urban Poverty

Overview

According to a recent survey (PMS 2004), of the total urban population of 38 million in Bangladesh, 43% (15 million) are poor, including 24% (8,3 million) who are extremely poor. The same two poverty lines are used to measure poverty in both urban and rural areas.* The upper line measures absolute poverty while the lower line measures extreme poverty.

Poverty can be measured by at least two methods: daily calorie intake (DCI) and cost of basic needs (CBN). Between 2000 and 2005, using the DCI method, absolute urban poverty fell by 17% (from 52% point to 43% point), while extreme urban poverty declined by just 2.4% (from 25% point to 24.4% point). The CBN method, however, shows a higher reduction in poverty than does the DCI method: absolute urban poverty fell by 19% (from 35.2% point to 28.4 % point) and extreme poverty fell by 27% (from 20% point to about 14.6% point). Nevertheless, the total number of urban poor people in urban areas rose from 19 million to 23 million, and the number of extreme urban poor rose from 6 million to 8.3 million. Moreover, while the percentage of the population living in extreme poverty fell in some towns, it rose in others.**

Importantly, between 1992 and 2005, average per capita calorie consumption in urban areas fell from 2258 to 2193 Kcal and average protein consumption fell from 65.49 to 64.88 grams. But while food consumption declined, household income and consumption increased during this period, with urban income reaching Tk. 10, 463 (compared to Tk. 6,096 in rural areas).

	Absolute urban poor		Extreme urban poor	
Survey year	No. in Million	%	No. in Million	%
2005	14.8	43.2	8.3	24.4
2000	13.2	52.4	6.0	25
1995-96	9.6	49.7	5.2	27.3
1991-92	6.8	46.7	3.8	26.3

Urban population below poverty line (DCI)

Survey yr.	Absolute urban poor	Extreme urban poor
2005	28.4	14.6
2000	35.2	20.0
1995-96	27.8	13.7
1991-92	42.7	23.6

Head count rate (CBN) of incidence of urban poverty (in %)

The reduction in income poverty can be attributed to the trickle down effect of sustained economic growth leading to increased consumption between 2000 and 2005. This trend among even the urban extreme poor undermines the notion that extreme poverty is resistant to change, with the poor trapped in a vicious cycle of low capability and income. Nevertheless, given that 23% of the urban population is extremely poor, it is clear that many households are still too poor to meet their daily calorific intake requirement. This obviously increases malnutrition risks as well as the inter-generational transmission of poverty.

The most disadvantaged urban poor are often the homeless who do not live in slums. Pavement dwellers, construction workers, beggars and domestic workers amongst others represent the dynamic and shifting face of the urban non-slum poor. In the city of Dhaka alone, between 1997 and 2007, the number of pavement dwellers has swelled from about 15,000 (BBS, 1997) to 20,000 (Amrao Manush, 2007).

Current Interventions

The revised second National Strategy for Accelerated Poverty Reduction (NSAPR-II) recognizes, that despite some progress in poverty reduction, extreme and chronic poverty persists. It notes a faster decline in urban areas – using CBN rather than DCI measures – but points out that for the lower poverty line, the speed of reduction is similar between rural and urban areas. Advocating a planned approach to urbanization to ensure equity alongside economic growth in Bangladesh's towns and cities, it notes the importance of promoting sustainable urbanization for poverty reduction and development.

About 57% of the development and non-development budgetary resources were allocated for poverty reduction activities in FY2007-08. But the amount specifically allocated to urban poverty reduction is not known. There are no social safety nets (SSN) programs that are designed exclusively for the urban extreme poor. Some SSN programs – including those for vulnerable group development, the old age allowance and allowances for widowed, deserted and destitute women – are implemented both in urban and rural areas. Others – such as cash for work schemes, cash transfers for girl's education, and the allowance for lactating women – are designed for rural areas only.

Traditional social welfare programs of the Government of Bangladesh (GoB) have mainly focused on specific vulnerable urban populations, such as orphans, the disabled, adolescents and vagrant women. These programs include: (i) shelter facilities such as day care centres, orphanages, correctional centres for juvenile children and vagrant homes; (ii) vocational training and rehabilitation centres for destitute children and women as well physically challenged persons; and (iii) educational centres for blind, dumb, deaf and other physically challenged children.

There are several shelter, vocational training and educational programs that target the urban extreme poor. With UNDP support, the GoB initiated a targeted intervention for street children – "Resources for Improving Street Children's Environment" - from 2000 to 2004. The programme, now renamed "Protection of Children at Risk" (2007-10) and supported by UNICEF, covers more than 8,000 children in six

City Corporations. Another UNICEF-supported program, "Basic Education for Hard to Reach Urban Working Children", startedits second phase in July 2004 and will continue until 2011. During this phase, the project has opened 6,646 learning centres in the six City Corporations, providing life-skills based basic education to 166,150 urban working children (60 per cent of whom are girls). The ILO, in partnership with Dhaka City Corporation and a number of NGOs, has also initiated a pilot project*** – "Urban Informal Economy" (2007-10) - in an area of Dhaka to eliminate child labor in the most hazardous work places. All of these programs are implemented by NGO partners in selected slums of the targeted cities.

In 2008, DFID launched two major programs in partnership with the GoB – "Stimulating Households Improvements Resulting in Economic Empowerment" (SHIREE) and the "Urban Partnerships for Poverty Reduction Program" (UPPRP 2008-14). SHIREE targets the poorest 10% of the population and covers 10,000 people in urban areas and 900,000 in rural areas. UPPRP, implemented by the GoB in partnership with UNDP and UN-HABITAT, aims to help three million urban poor people in thirty cities and secondary towns - especially extremely poor women and girls - by supporting community-led slum improvement and socio-economic development related initiatives. In addition, the multi-donor-supported 'Urban Primary Health Care Program' (2005-2011) covers the extreme urban poor living in slum areas in six City Corporations and five Pourashavas.

Presently, only a few international NGOs have urban programs that target the extreme urban poor. 'Amrao Manush', a Concern Worldwide and Irish Aid supported program, targets approximately 10,000 pavement dwellers in Dhaka city. The CARE Bangladesh-supported 'Promoting Rights of the Disadvantaged by preventing Violence against Women' programme aims to support 7,000 injection drug users and 5,000 sex workers in eight towns and cities.

Other slum improvement programs benefit the extreme poor, despite not targeting them explicitly. Two such programs are: (i) the second Urban Governance and Infrastructure Improvement Project (UGIIP2) in 35 Pourashavas; and (ii) the UNICEF-supported Sanitation, Hygiene Education and Water Supply in Bangladesh (SHEWA-B) programme, in 19 towns and districts.

Key issue

A more coordinated and comprehensive approach is needed to reach the extreme poor in urban areas

Rural poverty reduction has received more attention than urban poverty reduction. This is in part due to a belief among policy makers and urban elites that urban migration can be reversed if rural areas are developed and rural employment generated, even if a significant body of evidence from both Bangladesh and internationally suggests that this is highly unlikely to happen. While understanding of rural extreme poverty has therefore improved, the understanding of urban extreme poverty remains fragmented and policy responses inadequate.

Among the key gaps and issues concerning extreme urban poverty are the need for:

- a definition of extreme urban poverty;
- a systematic count of the numbers and locations of the extreme urban poor;
- appropriate policies for extreme urban poverty reduction and the development of supporting institutions and programs.

Many of these complex and interrelated issues need the urgent attention of policy makers and the development community and recommended actions include the following:

- **Define the urban poor and extreme poor.** The characteristics of the 'extreme urban poor' are not yet defined and the number of people living in extreme poverty in slum and non-slum areas remains unknown. Factors to consider are the lack of shelter and land security, service deficiency and other urban vulnerabilities which render extreme urban poverty multi-dimensional.

- **Develop different poverty lines to measure rural and urban poverty.** Urban and rural poverty are different and therefore need different analytical categories. For instance, compared to the rural poor, the urban poor are more dependent on the cash economy, have better livelihoods opportunities, and have higher incomes and consumption.

- **Fill the remaining information gap on the extreme poor living in slums and non-slum areas.** There is no data on the slum based extreme poor population in most cities and towns and no national survey has been conducted to estimate the homeless population in the country since 1997 (when the BBS for the first time started enumerating the "floating population").

- **Formulate policies and programs targeting the extreme urban poor.** The coverage of existing targeted programs is inadequate, and targeting and delivery mechanisms are weak and often ineffective. The extreme urban poor are largely deprived of access to micro-credit, and are poorly served or excluded entirely by public schemes and (unlike the rural poor) social safety net programs.

The gap between rich and poor is greater in urban areas, not least with regard to adult literacy, school enrolment, mortality and morbidity rates.**** Current policy and programmatic initiatives, however, are grossly inadequate to address the core issues of approximately 8 million urban extreme poor. These core issues include lack of: (i) land tenure security; (ii) basic infrastructure and services; (iii) employment; and (iv) social safety nets and social protection. Addressing these issues will require informed debate and action to put in place legislation for land tenure security, shelter for homeless people, and food and livelihoods security for all the urban poor. In addition, programmatic measures are required to provide social safety nets and social protection for both the economically active as well as dependant extreme poor.

* A person having a daily calorie intake of less than 2122 kilocalories is considered to be in absolute/moderate poverty and 1805 kilocalories in extreme poverty. Using income measures rather than calorie intake, the extreme poor are those people whose average per capita expenditure for 2007 is below 16 – 22 Tk per day, depending on the region. This is equivalent to US $0.23 - $0.32 per person per day, at current market exchange rate. (DFID-SHIREE, 2007)

** While the percentage of extreme poor declined from 28.2% to 20.2% and 44% to 27% in Dhaka and Chittagong respectively, it increased in Barisal from 30.2% to 40% and 38.5% to 43.2% in Khulna.

*** Following the ratification of the ILO Convention on the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour by the GoB in 2001

**** From a resurvey of cross-sections of households in Dhaka City, Afsar (2003) found that income for slum dwellers in proportion to that of non-slum households deteriorated from one-third to one-fifth between 1991 and 1998 (Afsar 2003). Similarly, at the primary level, the enrolment rate for slum children lagged behind their counterparts in outside of slums by 40%, and the gap increased to 60% at the tertiary level where only a fraction of slum dwellers were enrolled. Further, the morbidity rate was more than 50% for slum dwellers, compared to nearly 27% for non-slum residents.

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SECTION 2

Event Report: Bridging the Urban Divide

Welcome Speech by the Honorable Mayor of Sylhet City Corporation, Mr Badar Uddin Ahmed Kamran

Mr. Chairman, Respected Secretary of the Local Government Division Mr Monzur Hussain; Mr. Johan Willert, Honorable First Secretary, Embassy of Sweden; Mr. Alexander Jachnow, Convening Co-Chair of the LCG 'Urban Sector'; high officials, respected journalists, distinguished guests, ladies and gentleman - Assalamu Alaikum and good morning.

I am very happy and proud to be here with you at this conversation event on "Urban Poverty and Development in Bangladesh." We all know that poverty eradication and sustainable development are the principal global issues facing the world at present.

Poverty is the main enemy of this sub-continent. Bangladesh, our beloved country, is facing this problem especially severely. High growth rates, rapid unplanned urbanization, and insufficient facilities or essential commodities are creating many problems. After 39 years of our liberation, we still have not solved these problems to improve the living conditions of the urban poor and extremely poor. To eradicate poverty we should follow and maintain a proper strategy and policy.

Ladies and gentlemen, we are very much hopeful because the present government of Bangladesh, under the dynamic leadership of the Honorable Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, has identified poverty reduction as its main agenda for national growth and development. The vision of this government is reducing poverty and providing sustainable development for the people of this country by 2021.

I hope that if we can follow proper guidelines, can identify the main problems of poverty, and can maintain a close relationship between different agencies, we will be able to achieve our goal. Then we can observe our 50th Independence Day as a poverty free, peaceful country in 2021.

As an agricultural country, Bangladesh's poverty reduction policy should follow a strategic plan for food security, socio-economic development by urban partnerships, and support for small investors. Government has undertaken many welfare projects for this purpose. In the first year of the present government, programmes on poverty reduction, food safety and social security have already been implemented; and some tremendous initiatives in the agriculture sector have broken previous records.

The government has started the Urban Partnerships for Poverty Reduction project, in joint collaboration with UNDP and DFID, to support the implementation of strategies that respond to the challenges of urban poverty reduction in the context of rapid urbanization in Bangladesh.

The program will eventually be implemented in 24 Pourashavas and six City Corporations, and three million urban poor and extremely poor people - especially women and girls – are expected to benefit. The outputs of the project will be mobilized communities, improved living environments, and the development and implementation of pro-poor urban policies, and I hope that we will succeed

in fighting against poverty through this project between now and the end of the program in 2015. We are very much proud that the Honorable Finance Minister of the Peoples Republic of Bangladesh, Mr Abul Maal Abdul Muhith MP, inaugurated this program a few months ago; and after completing the initial ground work, we signed an MoU for the project in the presence of the Honorable Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government for the United Kingdom, The Right Honorable Mr John Denham MP.

Poverty reduction is not only a challenge for the Government. It is a challenge for the different agencies who are engaged in human rights activities. Bilateral and multilateral meetings, the exchange of policy, and the exchange of views and knowledge, can therefore be very helpful in contributing to this work.

I am very happy that the Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development and Cooperatives and the LCG 'Urban Sector' are hosting this poverty reduction conversation event in our peaceful city, which is known as the spiritual capital of Bangladesh. I am also very much delighted and proud that the Honorable Mayor of Borguna Municipality is present at this conference. On behalf of all the citizens of this holy city, I warmly welcome you all and I hope that through your active participation in this conversation, we will be able to find out a proper direction for urban poverty reduction.

Lastly I would like to convey my gratitude to the organizers for inviting me to take part in this valuable event. Let us work together for a poverty free, prosperous Shonarbangla which was the dream of the Father of The Nation, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.

I wish grand success to this programme.

Thank you very much.

Long live Bangladesh.

Welcome Speech by the Member of Parliament, Ms Chemon Ara Begum

I would like to convey my gratitude and thanks to the organizers for inviting me to this vital conversation event, titled "Urban Development for Poverty Reduction". I think this important conversation will definitely be helpful in designing and shaping strategies to address the challenges of urban poverty in Bangladesh.

The right and appropriate definition of poverty is a difficult issue that varies depending upon a country's geographical location, population, resources, judicial systems, and state of law and order. Generally, on the basis of different indicators, poverty can be divided into three categories. These are: the absolute poor, the poorest of the poor, and the ultra poor.

About 40% of the total population of Bangladesh is living below the poverty line and 10% of the total population are ultra poor – those who cannot effort to feed themselves twice in a day, may be homeless, and often lack necessary clothing. They are completely deprived in terms of health services and have no access to education and all the other fundamental civic services and facilities.

In addition to having a high population in relation to land area, excessive unemployment, unskilled labor, lack of education, insecurity of food, lack of awareness of reproductive health issues, river erosion due to climate change, floods, drugs and many other reasons result in poverty that constrains the socio-economic development of Bangladesh.

We all know that 38 years after liberation, our population has doubled in size while our land area has not been extended. Employment opportunities have not been generated in rural areas. Moreover the use of modern technology in the agricultural sector has increased pressure on farmers, sometimes resulting in their urban migration for economic reasons. Rapid migration in urban areas is resulting in new problems in daily urban life. The fast growing slums are becoming breeding grounds for terrorism. Poor working-class people get involved in drugs, terrorism and other anti-social activities or lose their ability to work in the face of severe physical and mental diseases. Involvement with illegal activities and a lack of education prevents them from engaging in positive economic development. Due to the rapid flow of migration from rural to urban areas, poor people are therefore becoming poorer. At the same time, ever increasing traffic problems results in loss of work time and obstruct socio-economic development.

Several NGOs are undertaking focused action in some cities, but this is not enough to be effective in solving the problems that exist due to inappropriate action plans and a lack of harmonization. Some NGOs are providing microcredit to the poor. But if the same family keeps borrowing money from different NGOs it will end up poorer.

To protect people from various life-threatening diseases, some NGOs provide services to drug addicted people. The availability of drugs and the ease of their use are resulting in serious problems of drug addiction in urban areas.

The Government of Bangladesh has introduced a revised Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper to help in its fight to reduce poverty.

The GoB has taken different initiatives to make Bangladesh self-sufficient in food production such as giving high subsidies to the energy sector to ensure a constant supply of irrigation, subsidizing fertilizers for farmers, making available credit for farmers, etc. The GoB also wants to export agricultural production.

In order to ensure poor people are not missing out on their educational rights, free education up to degree level has already been made available. The provision of free textbooks up to class nine is also a significant success.

The Honorable Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, with the aim of cutting the poverty rate in Bangladesh to 15% before 2021, has commenced with a wide range of actions which include: increasing the rate of old age allowance and raising allowances to Poor Freedom Fighters to 67%; increasing the rate of disability allowance; increasing the rate of the maternity allowance for working mothers with low income; increasing spending on the welfare of orphans and street kids; ensuring the accountability of existing microcredit agencies; setting up a disability welfare and support centre in order to provide disabled people with facilities; restarting Ghore Fera and Ekti Bari Ekti Khamar (Returning Home and One House One Farm) activities; creating employment opportunities for extremely underprivileged people; eradicating the act of begging completely by providing beggars with shelter and training; and organizing a National Service Program for unemployed people.

I invite all the public representatives, government officers and employees, NGOs and civil society representatives to strive incessantly to make the best use of their industry and potential in order to make the vision of the Government a success - to ensure that we succeed in building a poverty free, Digital Bangladesh by 2021, as visualized by the daughter of the Father of the Nation.

I am grateful to all of you and to the organisers of this event for giving me a chance to speak to you today.

Thanks to all

Joy Bangla

Joy Bangabandhu

May Bangladesh live long

Introduction

Section 2 contains the outcomes of the joint conversation event 'Bridging the Urban Divide in Bangladesh' held by the LCG Urban Sector Working Group together with the Local Government Division, GoB. The event took place in Sylhet from the 15th to 16th January, 2010 and brought together representatives of the government, civil society organizations, community based organisations, national research institutes and development partners. The conversation set out to discuss current trends and policies regarding urban poverty and development in Bangladesh and deliberate on possible solutions and necessary strategies for urban poverty reduction.

Following a set of reflections on the event by four members of poor urban communities who took part in the conversation, the findings are organised in line with the nine thematic areas set out in Section 1 and discussed in a series of working groups and plenary sessions throughout the event. In each thematic area inputs given by experts during the workshops and discussions from the working groups are summarized. To structure the outcomes and findings of these discussions, existing strengths, challenges, required actions, desired outcomes and relevant actors are identified wherever possible. Comments on the respective area made throughout the conversation – for example on posters displayed around the venue - have also been incorporated in these summaries to ensure the outcomes of discussions among the participants throughout the whole event are captured.

Some Comments by Community Representatives

Fatema Akter, Sufia Akter, Angury Begum, Abdul Hamid Fakir

This is a great initiative and we would like to thank the organizers and especially the UPPR project through which we have learnt to organize our communities and improve our living conditions. But we would like to request for the participants to include us in the policymaking process. If we are not included and not consulted how is our capacity to improve and how will you know what we need?

We live in such destitute and severe conditions – we do not have any jobs or income. There are thugs in our communities who make our lives miserable. Whatever jobs we get, employers do not necessarily pay us on time or properly. I cannot explain to you how difficult it is for us.

We come to the urban places for employment. Just giving us houses won't solve the problem. We need job security to make sure we can support our lifestyles. We need to acquire skills that can generate income.

We see ourselves as opportunities not as threats. We are part of the city just like all of you. Why can't all of you see us as opportunities?

Just before the elections, we become friends and families of the politicians. They promise us so many things. After the elections, after they have received our votes, then we are forgotten. We then become illegal and unwanted.

We never think that we just migrated to the cities – we feel that the cities invited us. Without us, who will clean your city? Who will drive your car, clean your houses, build your buildings and roads? We do not want too much space. It's a myth that there isn't enough space in the city. Allocation of land happens all the time. Why can't a little space be allocated for us?

Thematic Areas

Urban - Rural Linkages

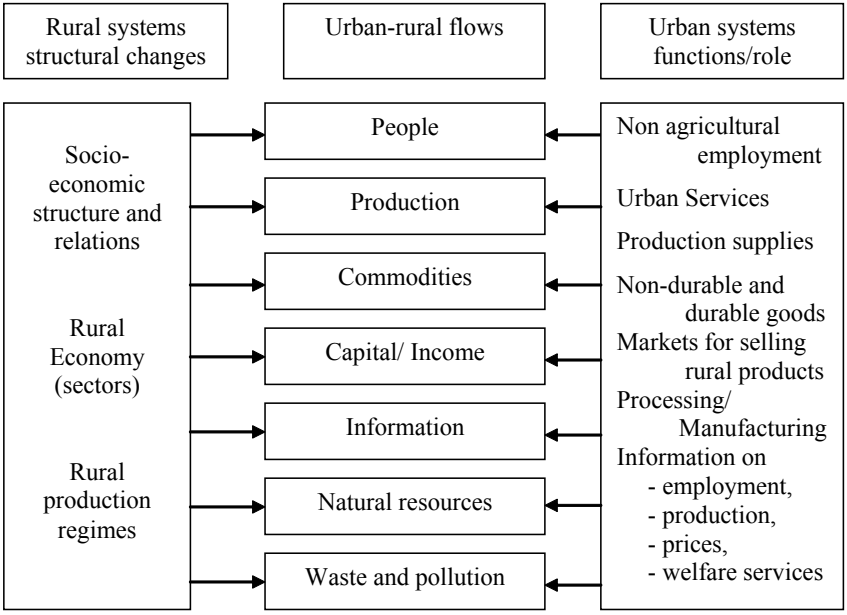
Input

Md. Musleh Uddin Hasan, member of the Bangladesh Institute of Planners and Assistant Professor, Department of Urban and Regional Planning, BUET, provided the participants with an overview of the present and future scenario concerning urban-rural linkages in Bangladesh. He began by describing the flows of people, commodities, information etc. that move in both directions between rural and urban areas at the level of the household and of the local economy as a whole (see diagram below).

Evidence Summary

- Strong interdependence of social, economic and environmental development between rural and urban areas (markets for goods and products, food and food processing, labour, raw materials etc.)
- Even stronger linkages between secondary cities and surrounding countryside (e.g. public services)
- Migration (temporary, seasonal, permanent) is complex, inevitable and often positive for development
- Linkages are of importance for both the rural and urban poor (income opportunities, food security etc.)

From Douglass (1998)



Focusing on the current scenario in Bangladesh, he analysed the main flows taking place between rural and urban areas at present as well as those who stand to benefit at both ends of the chain (see diagram below, where bold and right aligned text refers to the benefits to poor people).

Flows currently occurring	*Benefits/Beneficiaries at each end*	
	Rural	*Urban*
Food supply in cities from rural sources	Middlemen **Farmers**	Consumers, Businessmen **Low income people**
Commuting cities (at Bogra, Khulna)	**Rickshaw/van pullers**	Road users **Informal service providers**
Remittance – from cities	All income groups	Service/business
Remittance – from abroad	Middle class **Lower income class**	Investment/shop
Seasonal migration in cities	**Poor/landless households**	Urban informal services
Migration in cities-slums and squatter development	**Poor/landless households**	Land owner **Urban poor**
Urban informal economy	**Poor/middle class households**	Consumer **Urban poor**
Tourism development	**Marginal people**	Rich/middle class (both as consumer and supplier)

He concluded by setting out some opportunity areas regarding the urban-rural interface – such as urban residents with strong rural linkages and the vibrant urban informal sector – as well as a series of challenges and 'barriers' - for example the need to develop secondary towns as urban centres for rural products and the increasing number of climate refugees expected to move to urban areas in the coming years.

Discussion

The discussion began by identifying what the specific linkages between rural and urban sectors/areas in Bangladesh are. There was broad agreement among the discussants that migration is the primary link between rural and urban areas, with people generally moving to the latter for employment and livelihoods opportunities. However, it was also noted that rural livelihoods are not sustainable without market linkages to the urban sector. In turn, resources are available in rural areas that the urban sector requires for further development. Given the importance of these linkages, there was a consensus that better coordination and more resources are needed to improve the urban-rural interface.

STRENGTHS

• Urban growth is causing peri-urban expansion which has positive spill-over effects on the rural economy

• Social and cultural links are retained between rural ancestral homes and urban migrants – *this paves way for internal remittances and resource flows*

• Migration from rural to urban areas generates employment in both the formal and informal sectors

• Both intra-country and international remittances and urban economic growth are contributing to the overall economic growth of the country – *cities have become the 'powerhouses' of the economy*

CHALLENGES

• Weak infrastructure is a barrier to urban-rural movements and to peri-urban development

• Since migration is often to the informal sector in urban areas, no information is available for migrant workers on the possible risks associated with employment and living conditions in cities

• No coordination between rural social safety net programmes and other development schemes and urban development projects

• Lack of policy coordination – *specifically no coordination between Land Use Policy and Industry Policy*

SUGGESTED ACTIONS

- Follow/comply with the existing regulations and rules – *for example, the Land Use Policy*
- Build better infrastructure for greater connectivity – *for example, investment in transport links*
- Ensure equitable and efficient land management and utilization – *alignment of Land Use Policy and Industry Policy*
- Strengthen coordination between different implementing agencies who have control over resources such as land – *for example, ensure coordination with the Railway Division in the implementation of its master plan*
- Improve coordination between urban and rural local government bodies
- Promote industries outside of cities to increase peri-urban expansion – *for example, through providing better infrastructure in these areas*
- Explore innovative waste management projects that link rural and urban areas – *for example, using solid waste from urban areas as compost for rural agricultural production*

OUTCOMES

- Efficient resource management through policy alignment on utilization of land – *both agricultural and industrial*
- Generation of economic opportunities through two-way internal migration - *both to and from rural and urban areas*

ACTORS / STAKEHOLDERS

- Ministry of Communication
- Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development and Cooperatives
- City Corporations and Pourashavas
- Other NGO providers and research institutions
- Private sector such as industry owners

Health

Input

Opening the workshop, Md. Abu Bakkar Siddique, the project director of the second Urban Primary Health Care Project (UPHCP-II), began by placing the health challenges facing the urban poor in the context of the rapid growth in the number of slum dwellers – both globally and in Bangladesh - and the accompanying health risks of poor housing, inadequate water and sanitation etc.

Evidence Summary

- More (and better) health facilities, healthcare workers etc. in urban areas than rural ones *but* inaccessible for the urban poor
- Situation especially severe in primary healthcare as Ministry of Health does not have remit in towns and cities (although secondary hospitals and Mother and Child Welfare Clinics based there)
- Little capacity of Pourashavas and City Cooperation to provide facilities reflected in poor health outcomes for urban poor e.g. maternal health, nutrition etc. ...
- Second Urban Primary Health Care Project (UPHCP-II) in six City Corporations and five Pourashavas as well as variety of NGO programs but coverage need to increase

Special emphasis was placed on the high rates of maternal and infant mortality within slums and the negative consequences in this regard of the frequency of early marriage. The increasing risks in urban settings of HIV/AIDS, TB, Leprosis, Syphilis, Gonorrhea, Dengue, Malaria and RTIs/STIs, along with cardiovascular disease, were also highlighted.

Throughout the presentation, problems in the accessibility of health services in poor urban areas were emphasised. For example, according to the Bangladesh Urban Health Survey (2006), 51% of urban slum dwellers have only one health centre in their community, and the 2005 Household Income and Expenditure Survey found that 39% of patients go directly to pharmacies without any medical consultancy beforehand. Nationwide, inadequate public provision results in 56% of health expenditure being financed by the patient themselves, with obvious detrimental effects on the poor; and while secondary and tertiary facilities run by the Ministry of Health are usually located in urban areas, primary health care services are primarily provided by local government and NGOs and are inadequate to meet the scale of demand.

Md. Siddique concluded by highlighting a number of opportunity areas and areas for action, including the existence of significant programme experience of providing health services for the poor in urban areas – for example through UPHCP II, BRAC's Manoshi programme and the Smiling Sun franchise – and the need for a strategic approach to urban health going forward.

Discussion

Discussion and debate focused primarily on primary healthcare in urban areas rather than secondary or tertiary services. This reflected a shared understanding amongst participants that towns and cities are underserved in terms of primary healthcare (for which responsibility lies with local government), while at the same time having better access to specialist and hospital-based services. 'Primary healthcare' in this context was understood to include nutrition and population services.

STRENGTHS

- High concentration of health infrastructure – *including secondary and tertiary public facilities, and both private and NGO providers*
- High concentration of human resources
- Existing programme experience of providing for the poor – *including provision of free services for the poor (30% in total) under the second Urban Primary Health Care Project (UPHCP-II) and Smiling Sun, and BRAC's 'Manoshi' programme in urban slums*
- Responsibility with local government not Ministry of Health - *greater potential for flexible, localised approaches*

(This issue was identified by participants as both a potential strength and weakness. See additional point in 'challenges' below)

CHALLENGES

- Very low coverage of urban poor by government programmes and services - *existing programmes insufficient in scale and over 300 Pourashavas are outside of UPHCP-II (which covers at most 46% of the total urban population) and Manoshi*
- Lack of resources - *the allocation for urban areas from the Ministry of Health does not reflect population size and local government resources (in terms of both finance and manpower) are very limited*
- Donor dependency - *existing programmes are all reliant on donor funds*
- Responsibility with local government not Ministry of Health - *lack of capacity on healthcare in Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development and Co-operatives, City Corporations and Pourashavas resulting in project based approach with insufficient strategic coordination or national policy*

(This issue was identified by participants as both a potential strength and weakness. See additional point in 'strengths' above)

- Insufficient attention paid to public and environmental health issues in urban areas - *including awareness raising on public health and hygiene among the urban poor*

SUGGESTED ACTIONS

• Increase budget allocation for urban primary health care – *adjust central budgets to reflect population of urban areas and increase local government resources for health*

• Introduce programme of capacity building on health for local government (including municipal health departments)

• Improve coordination on urban health between the Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development and Cooperatives and the Ministry of Health and Family Planning – *for example, jointly plan component on urban health for next Health, Nutrition and Population Sector Program*

• Establish Directorate of Urban Health in Local Government Division

• Produce a national Urban Health Strategy

• Give greater attention to family planning and nutrition services in urban areas?

(This point was contested by some participants who felt that existing services already give sufficient priority to these issues)

• Scale up the Urban Primary Health Care Project – *for example, by extending it to more Pourashavas*

• Experiment with new models and approaches (either within or outside UPHCP) - *explore alternative health financing models (e.g. vouchers or health insurance) and make greater use of existing services providers, including private as well as public and NGO sector*

• Integrate poverty targeting mechanisms in urban health (e.g. UPHCP-II's 'red card' system for the poor) with new or existing poverty reduction programmes or services (e.g. social safety net and employment programmes)

• Develop targeted health programmes for street dwellers

• Develop strategic approach to public and environmental health risks that impact on the urban poor

OUTCOMES

- Improving urban primary healthcare has the potential to make rapid and significant contributions to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (for example, reducing infant and maternal mortality)
- Poor health is both a cause and consequence of poverty and improved access to healthcare services for the urban poor is a critical factor in overall poverty reduction
- Reduce the spread of communicable diseases in urban areas, including sexually transmitted diseases and HIV/AIDS
- Given the contribution of the urban sector to national GDP, a healthier urban workforce would contribute towards stronger economic growth
- Achieve the vision of a healthy Bangladesh!

ACTORS / STAKEHOLDERS

- Ministry of Health and Family Planning
- Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development and Cooperatives
- City Corporations and Pourashavas
- Public facilities based in urban areas (hospitals, Mother & Child Welfare Clinics etc.)
- Second Urban Primary Healthcare Programme
- Health, Nutrition and Population Sector Program (HNPSP)
- Development partners (especially those supporting UPHCP-II and HNPSP)
- Smiling Sun
- Manoshi Programme (BRAC)
- Other NGO providers and research institutions
- Private sector providers

Social Cohesion and Security

Input

Ms Chemon Ara Begum MP, began the discussions in the working group session with some reflections on key issues related to social cohesion and security for the urban poor. She stressed the importance of poverty eradication in contributing to social stability, noting that the Prime Minister was supporting a number of significant initiatives in this respect. Particular emphasis was placed on the need to ensure that the education system is effective in reaching the poorest members of society in urban areas.

Another area of concern highlighted in her remarks was the functioning of NGOs in towns and cities across Bangladesh. She suggested that these organisations do not always work in the public interest and that there is insufficient oversight to ensure that they spend their money properly and deliver on the outputs they have promised. This risks undermining social cohesion in communities and contributing to insecurity or unrest. The MP singled out micro-credit organisations as institutions of particular concern in this regard.

Finally, Ms Begum MP pointed to various social issues that threaten the stability of communities in urban areas, including alcoholism and drug abuse.

Evidence Summary

- Global evidence that rapid urbanization can aggravate levels of insecurity, including crime and violence (especially where inequality is high)
- Lower crime rates in Asian cities but given pace of urban inequality in Bangladesh there is no room for complacency
- Urban poor are disproportionately affected by crime and violence, and less able to cope with the consequences
- Gender based violence is a particular concern.

Discussion

The discussion reflected the complexity of the topic and covered a wide variety of issues. There was general agreement among the participants that 'social cohesion and security' both affect and are affected by a wide variety of the other 'critical areas' discussed during the event, including tenure security, access to education and other basic services, and the availability of employment, livelihood opportunities and social safety net programmes. For this reason, considerable emphasis was placed on the importance of a coordinated and integrated approach to improving social cohesion and security for the urban poor in Bangladesh.

STRENGTHS

• Presence of local government, NGOs, and community and social organizations in many poor urban communities – *these organisations have an important role to play in strengthening social cohesion and addressing insecurity*

• Existence of replicable social protection programmes – *considerable experience exists within Bangladesh and internationally of social protection programmes with the potential to strengthen social cohesion (e.g. by reducing inequality through cash transfers)*

• Availability of technologies - *mobile phones and other affordable communication technologies are making it easier for the urban poor to maintain social networks with both urban and rural contacts*

(This issue was identified by participants as both a potential strength and weakness. See additional point in 'challenges' below)

CHALLENGES

• No fixed abode and continuous fear of eviction – *security of tenure for the urban poor is fundamental if other dimensions of security and social cohesion are to be achieved*

• The existence of significant political, regional and religious differences within many poor urban settlements places considerable strains upon community cohesion and may lead to conflict

• Limited access to education, health and other basic services has the potential to undermine security and result in conflict over community resources

• Almost no government social protection programmes exist in urban areas – *this contributes to rising urban inequality that may in turn lead to insecurity and social breakdown including crime, domestic violence and drug and alcohol abuse*

• The existence and social acceptability of high levels of gender-based violence, with poor urban women the most vulnerable to its consequences

• Lack of strong social relationships within many poor urban settlements – *newly arrived migrants may lack stable social networks; a lack of time and other resources makes developing networks difficult for the poorest households; and, in some communities, a high turnover of residents undermines social cohesion*

(This point was contested by some participants who noted that many poor urban households – especially in settlements outside of Dhaka – have been residents in the same community for decades and have strong social networks)

• The presence of mastaan and other 'middlemen' in poor urban settlements

• Weak regulation of micro-finance organisations, NGOs and community organisations leading to a high risk of fraud and other illegal activities

• Insufficient representation of the poorest in community organisations as well in formal political processes, leading to their exclusion from decision making and from services provided by both government and NGOs

• The scape-goating of the urban poor during periods of political or social unrest – *for example through mass arrests of slum dwellers*

• Discrimination by the police against the urban poor resulting in a lack of police protection or formal justice for poor urban citizens

• Availability of technologies - *despite the increasing affordability of mobile phones and other communication technologies, a 'technology gap' still exists in the access of poorest households to their benefits*

(This issue was identified by participants as both a potential strength and weakness. See additional point in 'strengths' above)

SUGGESTED ACTIONS

There was general agreement among participants that piece-meal projects should be avoided in favour of an integrated and coordinated approach involving all stakeholders, including:

• Addressing economic factors that underlie social breakdown and insecurity by providing: employment opportunities; access to skills training; and access to finance for the urban poor

• Improving access to education, health and other basic services for the urban poor to promote social inclusion and prevent community conflicts over resources

• Addressing inequality through targeted social protection programmes for the poorest urban households - *including cash transfers and subsidisation of essential services*

• Supporting the urban poor to strengthen their own social networks – *for example through effective and inclusive community organisations*

• Exploring innovative ways to improve tenure security for the urban poor

(The importance of tenure security to the overall security and well-being of the urban poor was noted by all the participants but there was no consensus on how this could be best addressed)

- Controlling drugs, arms and other illegal activities at the point of origin rather than blaming poor urban communities for a nationwide problem
- Improving the use of technology in targeting and delivery mechanisms for urban poverty reduction programmes (including the dissemination of project information to the target group) to ensure the poorest households benefit the most
- Introducing programmes to tackle the causes and consequences of gender-based violence – *for example, domestic violence, sexual harassment of young women and the dowry system*
- Placing special emphasis on programmes for adolescents and boys (including stipends to improve access to education) given that they are at particular risk of becoming involved in anti-social behaviour
- Considering the establishment of community-based, Pourashava-led primary schools with both poor and better-off students to ensure community mixing
- Introducing and enforce proper guidelines and regulations for NGOs, community and microfinance organizations to improve their performance and reduce the risk of conflict over fraud and other illegal activities – *consider a role for local government in overseeing the activities of locally based NGOs and other community organisations*
- Promoting community-based approaches to crime prevention - *for example, community based policing*
- Instituting judicial reforms to improve the justice system for the urban poor – *for example, providing access to legal aid for the poor*

ACTORS / STAKEHOLDERS

- Local government
- Community organisations and NGOs (including micro-finance organisations)
- Political parties and politicians
- Police
- Criminal justice system

Labour Markets

Discussion

The discussion commenced with an elaborate problem analysis of labour markets in Bangladesh. A wide range of challenges for the urban poor, such as very bad working conditions, the low level of wages, gender disparities, a lack of job security and a lack of skills to access higher salary jobs, were identified by the participants. Solutions mentioned included offering more vocational training to upgrade skills and providing access to credit. As a prerequisite for taking action, however, it was agreed that a better understanding was needed of labour market demands and of barriers that hamper access to better jobs for the urban poor (beyond inadequate access to credit and a lack of skills).

Evidence Summary

- Urban centres are engines of growth and sites of opportunity with a rapidly growing labour force
- Labour is the most important asset for poor urban households and most work in the informal sector (as much as 74% of the urban workforce)
- Positive impacts for the urban poor as well as on rural poverty through remittances
- But low wages, under- and un-employment, low skills and poor working conditions undermine the gains for many..
- ..and conditions for child labourers are of particular concern

CHALLENGES

- Very bad working conditions - *especially in the informal sector but also in better paid jobs (e.g. the garment sector)*
- No risk compensation - *even for workers in high-risk work environments*
- No social security in case of unemployment, ill-health and other crises – *especially in the informal sector but also in the 'semi-formal' garment sector*
- Access to permanent *employment is not guaranteed and no letters of appointment or contracts are issued - this leads to insecurity with regards to job duration, regular salary, and working conditions*
- *Very high levels of child labour*
- Wage and other work-related disparities between men and women in slum areas - *women earn less than men and face additional challenges and disadvantages when working - e.g. during maternity - even though the Constitution of Bangladesh provides for equal chances to all*

(The lower level of wages for women was justified by some participants by the argument that women were engaged in less physically intensive work.)

• Resettlement of poor communities to badly located peripheral areas where there are fewer employment opportunities

• No access to credit with low interest rates for the urban poor to generate and expand self-employment.

(A number of participants felt that this would be insufficient to promote social advancement, see next point)

• Power relations and a lack of social connections may hamper people from accessing better jobs and achieving social advancement - *knowing powerful people may be more important than state interventions or market mechanisms in accessing better paid jobs, and improving access to credit may not be enough to address this issue*

• Lack of skills leading to high level of competition between unskilled workers which in turn pushes wage rates down

• Lack of information about the demands of labour markets for different skills to enable effective investment in vocational training and education

• Increasing use of machines reducing demand for labour and increasing unemployment.

• Insufficient enforcement and implementation of existing legal provisions and labour laws

• Lack of provision for specific policies and programmes on labour markets in NSAPR II despite its recognition of the challenges facing the poor and underemployed in the urban informal sector

SUGGESTED ACTIONS

• Identify labour market shortages and demands and provide vocational training and education for the urban poor to enhance skills and enable access to higher salary jobs in the identified sectors

• Provide access to credit for the urban poor

• Identify and address constraints for people to access better jobs beyond access to credit and training e.g. social and power relations, access to child-care for working women

• Improve working conditions - *especially in the informal sector*

• Promote greater job security – *for example, through appointment letters or contracts mentioning job duration, salary and working conditions*

• Develop greater understanding regarding the low level of wages in urban Bangladesh and disseminate information to promote more debate on this issue (e.g. in the media)

• Improve rural development to reduce migration from rural to urban areas

(There was considerable disagreement on this point with some participants suggesting that migration between urban areas is higher than rural to urban migration, and others noting that changes in migration patterns are primarily linked to the availability of economic opportunities and that this is largely beyond the control of state-sponsored development initiatives. See also the following action point)

• Invest in small towns to support local livelihoods and balanced regional development - *migration from small urban areas to bigger towns is higher in Bangladesh than rural to urban migration*

• Promote labour intensive infrastructure programmes in poor urban communities – *build on existing experience in rural Bangladesh and internationally*

• Develop specific interventions to address the needs of child workers

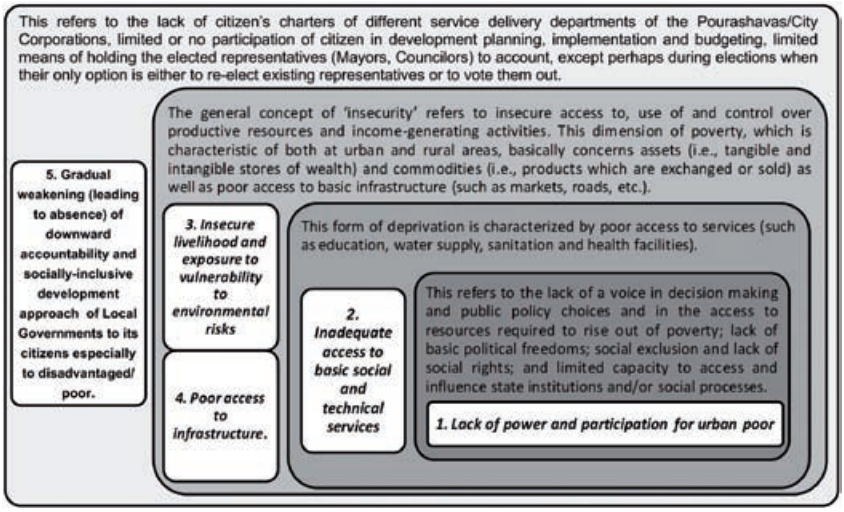
Urban Municipal Governance

Input

The input for the discussion on Urban Municipal Governance was provided by Mr. Chowdhury Hamidul from GTZ. Throughout his introduction, he highlighted the importance of understanding poverty as a direct result of inadequate policies and 'piece meal' development programmes that prevent sustainable access to social services or control over productive assets (e.g. land and financial resources), and hamper the political empowerment of the urban poor. He suggested that improving municipal governance is directly related to how the public service delivery system is developed, and that reducing poverty largely depends both on the political and economic context and on how decentralization is designed and implemented. In this regard, the conditions that are indispensable for decentralization to increase social welfare include a functioning local democracy; adequate fiscal autonomy for local government; and adequate technical expertise among local and national government officials. Mr Hamidul illustrated the complex inter-relationship between municipal governance issues and urban poverty with the aid of the following diagram.

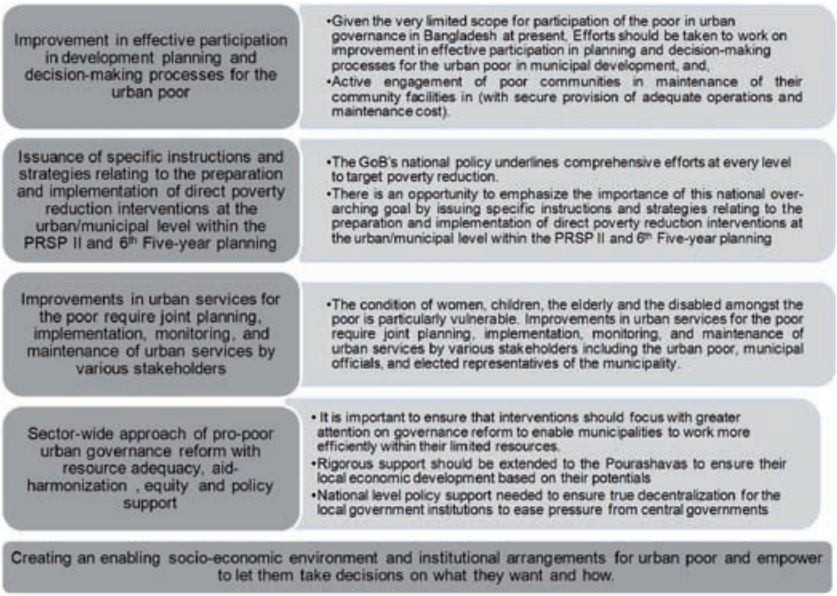
Evidence Summary

- Good urban governance is characterised by participation, transparency, accountability, rule of law, effectiveness and equity
- Most municipalities and City Corporations have very limited financial and human resources as well as a lack of real autonomy contributing to inadequate governance capacities
- The poor are most vulnerable to the consequences of poorly governed cities because of their reliance on public services and lack of influence



Inspiration from:
UNDP Oslo Governance Centre, "A Users' Guide to Measuring Local Governance"

Drawing on experiences of governance improvement and poverty reduction in Bangladesh, he observed that, for the urban poor, the most sustainable approach is often to create an enabling socio-economic environment and institutional arrangements and let them take decisions on what they want and how. Further, modes of delivery need to be designed and implemented utilizing local institutional settings and local capacities. Turning to the specific challenges facing Bangladesh, as well as potential solutions, he concluded that sound municipal governance systematically contributes to urban poverty reduction but that there is a need for improvement in many areas, as illustrated by the following diagram.



Discussion

The discussion covered a wide a range of issues regarding good governance at the municipal level. Municipalities were identified as the most appropriate authority regarding the design and implementation of poverty reduction interventions within their boundary as they are closer to inhabitants than central authorities. However, while the new 'Municipality Ordinance 2008' provides adequate guidance on citizen participation in form of Town Level Coordination Committees (TLCCs) and Ward Level Coordination Committees (WLCCs), there was general agreement that the legal framework needs to be harnessed more effectively if the needs of the urban poor are to be adequately addressed. While a number of participants highlighted recent interventions and achievements in improving urban governance in selected cities in Bangladesh, there was considerable discussion regarding why many municipalities have been unable to undertake effective action on poverty

reduction. Issues discussed included: the lack of a national policy on slum/informal settlement improvement; poor urban management capacity among municipal staff; lack of long-term stability or continuity in development initiatives; and – crucially - inadequate resource allocation from central government and insufficient control over development expenditures at a local level.

There was broad consensus on a number of actions with the potential to enhance the effectiveness of municipalities' roles in poverty reduction and better serve the urban poor. These included incorporating poverty concerns into the 'Draft Urban Management Policy'; identifying capacity development needs at the municipal level regarding urban poverty reduction and inclusive urban planning; and strengthening good governance within municipality administrations to ensure accountability to all citizens including the poorest. Nevertheless, a number of issues surfaced during discussions where there was a lack of consensus among participants. These included: reasons for the limited allocation of grants from the central government to municipalities and the constrained resource base of local government; the importance of secure land tenure for slum/informal settlements; the appropriate role for municipalities in designing and implementing development interventions undertaken by different agencies; and whether ‚top-down' planning processes of municipalities restrict the space for participation.

STRENGTHS

- Mayors and councilors are directly elected by citizens and are accountable to them

- Municipalities are the right authorities to take responsibility for poverty reduction activities - they have the remit to provide basic services and are in an advantageous position to undertake planning, design and implementation of service delivery interventions due to their closeness with local inhabitants

- Municipalities have a broader income-base and comparatively better capacity compared to rural local government and can therefore mobilize greater resources

- The Municipality Ordinance 2008 has guaranteed and strengthened platforms for citizen participation in the form of TLCCs and WLCCs

- The Government's commitment towards strengthening municipalities and urban development is encouraging and the upcoming Urban Sector Policy is expected to introduce more guidance on inclusive urban development

- There is considerable programme experience of improving urban goverance to build on – *for example, the Slum Improvement Project, Municipal Services Project, UGIIP 1 and 2, and UPPRP*

CHALLENGES

- Limited transparency and accountability at municipal level
- Lack of decentralization practices both at national and local level.
- Lack of long-term stability or continuity in development initiatives – *especially in periods of political instability or change*
- No land security/tenure security for slum inhabitants and no national policy on slum/informal settlement upgrading - *this also hinders access to basic public utilities and services for poor urban residents*
- Municipalities have functions but limited capacities and no clear and adequate understanding on roles and responsibilities among staff – *this is the case for poverty reduction activities as well as for the broader role of municipalities in inclusive urban development*
- Inadequate coordination among different development projects and limited participation of municipalities in such interventions
- Lack of systematic or strategic consideration of urban poverty reduction at either the municipal or the national level
- Lack of coordination and limited capacity within different ministries to support poverty reduction activities at the local level.
- WLCCs and TLCCs exist and are endorsed by the Government, but are not always enforced and functional

• Limited allocation of resources from central government – *the allocation system is not based on population size*

• Limited ability for municipalities to improve local resource base - for example mayors are not always interested in increasing local tax rates for political reasons

(This latter point was strongly contested by some of the participants who did not agree that a lack of willingness from mayors was constraining increases in local tax income)

SUGGESTED ACTIONS

• Finalize the National Urban Policy incorporating issues relating to the rights and entitlements of the urban poor and extreme poor – *to support this process, the policy formulating sub-committee of GoB is requested to share the draft with the LCG 'Urban Sector' and the Municipal Association of Bangladesh and invite them to make comments before submitting it for approval*

• Encourage and support municipalities to practice participatory planning and decision making to ensure effective participation of the urban poor in planning processes and community engagement in improvement and maintenance of infrastructure – *for example, TLCCs and all other forums/committees should be activated by holding regular meetings and ensuring participation in decision making by representations of different stakeholders, including the poor and extreme poor*

• Provide comprehensive support for the capacity development of municipalities on key development and management issues, including poverty reduction – *this support could include training, institutional development, exposure visits to 'best practice' examples, and assistance to improve local resource mobilization and utilization*

• Strengthen accountability and transparency in municipal management – *in particular, by ensuring that 'citizen platforms' and other accountability mechanisms are functional to monitor the performance of the municipality*

• Introduce a population based system for allocating central government resources to enable municipalities to expand and widen coverage of their poverty reduction interventions and services

• Learn lessons from the experiences and achievements of recent programmes and interventions aimed at improving urban governance in Bangladesh

OUTCOMES

- The security and safety of the urban poor is ensured
- Decentralization principles and regulations are practiced
- Participatory and inclusive urban development plans and budgets are prepared and implemented
- Local resources are mobilized and utilized effectively
- The urban poor are integrated into the decision-making process
- Dependency on central government and donors is reduced
- The quality, coverage and equity of basic public services and utilities are improved
- Self-confidence, trust and mutual respect among citizens and the municipality are enhanced

ACTORS / STAKEHOLDERS

- Ministry of Local Government Rural Development & Cooperatives
- Local Government Division
- Other line ministries
- Municipalities (including Pourashavas and City Corporations)
- Development partners
- TLCC members
- WLCC members
- Civil society organizations
- Governmental and non-governmental training providers

Land Tenure & Security

Discussion

Throughout the discussion participants highlighted the critical importance of land tenure and security and its complex inter-relationships with other dimensions of urban poverty. Among the topics discussed were: the need for a comprehensive Urban Development Policy that takes land security into account; the high price, high population density and relative scarcity of land in urban areas; and the lack of formal land agreements in poor urban settlements which makes even long-term residents vulnerable to eviction. An additional issue raised - of considerable relevance to urban poverty reduction programmes in general - was the danger that improvements to housing, basic services and infrastructure in poor urban areas impact negatively on the poorest members of the community, as they risk being forced out of an area as it becomes a more attractive place to live.

Evidence Summary

- Massive increase in slums in last 50 years with slum population of more than 5.4 million in City Corporations and growth rate as high as 10%
- Outdated legal and regulatory framework, extremely high prices and disputed ownership force the urban poor to illegally occupy land...
- ... But, illegality or informality of these settlements does not mean tthey are emporary or recent: many slums are occupied by the same households for generations

CHALLENGES

- Lack of housing policies and regulations on spatial planning
- Lack of formal agreements for rent and ownership of land and houses in poor urban settlements
- Lack of willingness by government to use its vacant land for affordable housing
- Insufficient community participation in the planning process and lack of information regarding available land
- Absence of mechanisms to finance houses and land improvements, especially for local government and poor urban communities
- Insufficient implementation of laws protecting the rights of poor urban residents

SUGGESTED ACTIONS

• Raise awareness of the importance of security of land for the poor - especially among politicians - and improve dialogue between government (both national and local) and other stakeholders on this issue

• Support different urban communities and settlements to raise their own voice on land issues – *for example, through a conference to discuss land ownership*

• Improve understanding about land classification and the existing land tenureship landscape in urban areas – *for example, by undertaking mapping to increase access to information for communities on government land – including 'khas' land - and private land ownership (including vacant land)*

• Support local government to increase revenue flows to invest in improving services on their own land

• Improve the engagement of communities in land use planning

• Organize a 'package of interventions' focusing on land tenure and housing in one Pourashava through a collaboration between local government and development partners

• Adapt lessons learned on land tenure from rural areas for adoption in urban areas

• Increase knowledge and understanding of initiatives in Bangladesh (e.g Kustia) and other countries that address security of land for the poor

• Ensure the issue of land for the poor in urban areas is included in all future urban policy documents

• Improve implementation of existing laws to protect the rights of residents in poor urban settlements

• Support government to design, finance and implement financial mechanism for housing improvement and resettlement

• Improve understanding among government, civil society and international agencies of other critical land security issues including: the consequences of eviction for poor urban residents; the affordability or otherwise of land for the poor; urban density and poverty across different municipalities; and the role and influence of mastaans or 'middlemen' in poor urban settlements

Environment

Input

Dr. Jinnah, WaterAid, began the session by suggesting that, while the evidence document was comprehensive – especially in relation to water and sanitation - there was still scope to broaden the discussion to include some additional key issues. For example, he pointed to the need within urban waste management to shift the focus from a solid waste 'collection' system to a more comprehensive solid waste management system, and, moreover, the need to improve sludge management, especially through the use of innovative technology. He also noted that particular attention is needed for the development of coping strategies to address issues related to the impact of climate change and that special emphasis should be placed on the problems faced by the poor urban population. Other issues raised included the lack of an institutional mechanism for hygiene promotion, the scale and severity of problems in Dhaka City, and decreasing and inequitable trends in investment in different urban settings.

Evidence Summary

- Environmental challenges linked to unmanaged urban growth include water and air pollution, increased flooding and land degradation
- Poverty and urban environmental degradation are closely correlated and the poor are disproportionately affected by a badly managed urban environment
- Slums are more often in sites prone to natural disasters and are most vulnerable to the increased environmental risks of climate change and variability
- Water and sanitation are particular crucial in urban settings with poor women and children most at risk

Identifying key challenges and constraints, Dr Jinnah pointed to inadequate clarity on roles, responsibilities and mandates of different government actors and a lack of capacity among all those concerned, including local government. This is further compounded by a lack of technological innovation and of consistent strategy and policy, for example in water services for the urban poor. However, concluding on a positive note with some opportunity areas and potential solutions, Dr Jinnah suggested that there is emerging momentum to address the challenges of the urban environment, given the political commitment of the current Government of Bangladesh, and that significant numbers of urban projects are now underway, with proven successful models available for reaching the urban poor with reasonable investment.

Discussion

The discussion began with a debate on the definition of the ‚urban environment'. It was felt that the evidence presented in the briefing paper placed too great an emphasis on water supply and sanitation, and that 'environment' as whole is a much wider concept with a multi-disciplinary orientation. During the discussion, the following issues were identified as important components of the urban environment in Bangladesh (with special regard to their relationship with urban poverty): water supply; sanitation and hygiene; water quality; solid waste management; sludge management; crowding/noise pollution; water logging; indoor dust/air pollution; lighting issues/darkness; quality housing; fire; insufficient open spaces/play grounds; and climate vulnerabilities as a whole. There was some discussion as to whether a special emphasis should be placed on Dhaka City given the severity of environmental threats to the daily life of slum dwellers and the urban poor in the capital, and it was suggested that industrial waste management and waste water treatment in Dhaka City need particular attention. Following a lively debate, a broad consensus was reached that a definition of the environment of relevance to the urban poor should take into account the quality of people's lived environment and their use of natural resources, and consider the implication of neighbourhood, local, regional and global environmental factors on the daily lives of the urban poor.

STRENGTHS

- The Government of Bangladesh and development partners are increasingly concerned with urban environmental degradation and are keen to implement programmes to improve the situation.

CHALLENGES

- Urban environment projects are not always women and child friendly
- There are many different organisations working in urban areas and coordination is weak, so the role of different stakeholders in managing and safeguarding the urban environment is not always clear – *for example, local government, ministries, the community and services providers (RAJUK, WASA etc.)*
- The urban environment remains a low priority area - there is a lack of awareness among both poor communities and government officials regarding the importance of a high quality urban environment
- Investment in water and sanitation has been decreasing over time

SUGGESTED ACTIONS

• The scope of issues addressed though urban environmental policy and programming should be broadened by listening to the priorities of the urban poor – *the community should be involved at all stages (planning and budgeting, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation) and the creation of an inventory of urban environmental issues for the poor should be considered*

• The roles and responsibilities of local government institutions concerned with the urban environment should be clarified in a new law – *this could also include a formalised role for the urban poor in decision making and planning through Town Level and Ward Level Coordination Committees*

• Orientation and training of government officials with responsibility for the urban environment should be improved

• Capacity building to improve the environmental management systems of urban local government institutions should be introduced – *this should include an emphasis on environmental issues affecting the urban poor, participatory planning processes and budgeting*

• The functional linkages between different ministries involved in dealing with environmental issues and urban local government (Pourashavas and City Corporations) should be strengthened - *for example, the relationship between the Department of Environment and local government is vital if the management of industrial waste is to be improved*

• Government, development partners and civil society organisations should improve coordination of their support for the urban environment

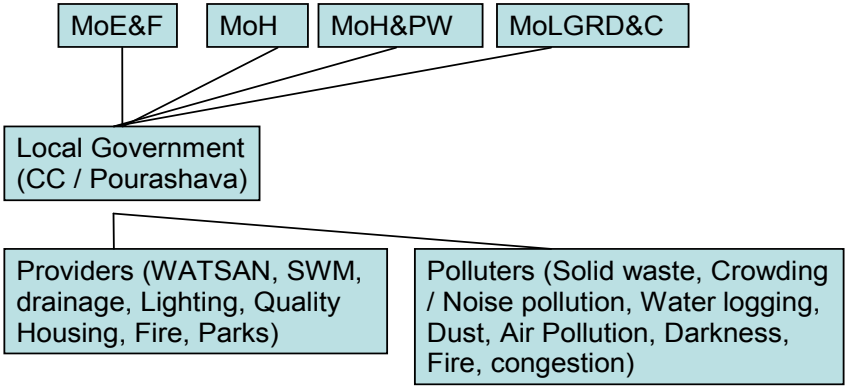
• Succesful urban environment programmes should be scaled up and lessons learned should be incorporated into the planning process.

• Environmental policy should consider risks at different scales – *local, national, regional and global*

OUTCOMES

- A clean and healthy environment exists for poor people in urban communities

ACTORS / STAKEHOLDERS



- The community
- Civil society organisations
- Development partners
- Private sector

Education

Input

The input for the Education discussion was provided by Mr Debashish Ranjan, UNICEF. He began by presenting an overview of the situation in Bangladesh, noting that pre-school attendance is low – only 14.6% - but that remarkable progress has been made on primary enrolment, which reached 91% by 2008. However, despite this encouraging trend, the drop-out rate is high, with almost half of children failing to reach Grade 5. Studies have shown that the majority of households that have stopped sending children to school are poor and do so as a coping strategy.

Evidence Summary

- Education and poverty are connected in two main ways: 1) investment in education enhances the skills and productivity of poor households; BUT: 2) poverty constrains educational achievement (e. g. households pressured to send children to work)
- Physical proximity to schools in urban settings does not mean adequate access for the poor because of inadequate facilities and high costs
- Attendance rates in slums are therefore 27% lower than the national average while very large class sizes (averaging over 100 in urban government primary schools) reduce quality

In terms of quality of education, Mr Ranjan suggested that there is wide agreement among experts that it is unsatisfactory for the vast majority of primary and secondary school students in Bangladesh, and that many children complete primary and secondary school without basic competencies. A significant factor in this is the high pupil-teacher ratio; a problem that is especially acute in urban areas, where class sizes often exceed 100. Many primary schools run on double shifts to accommodate large numbers of students in small classrooms and student-teacher contact hours in the primary schools of Bangladesh are among the lowest in the world. However, he noted that children involved in non-formal education typically have the advantage of smaller class sizes ranges from 25-30 pupils per teacher. Regarding equality of access, Mr Ranjan pointed out that the proportion of girls attending primary and secondary school in Bangladesh has risen in recent years and this trend has eliminated the bias against girls at both the primary and secondary level. However, despite this success, some groups have disproportionately limited access to education, including children with disabilities, street children, working children, and children living in urban slums.

Turning to the problems in increasing access to education for poor children, Mr Ranjan pointed to: lack of knowledge and awareness of the right to education for all children, especially those from vulnerable population groups; poor quality of teaching; poor quality school facilities – especially infrastructure and educational materials; and the fragmented school system (including insufficiently coordinated non-formal education services). He suggested that of particular concern in urban areas are the high costs of education and the trade-off faced by many poor families

between educating their children and the financial benefits of engaging them in child labor. This is exacerbated by the fact that the primary school stipend programme - introduced by the Government in 2002 to increase enrollment rates - does not extend to children in urban areas, thus excluding severely deprived children living in urban slums. In addition, children with disabilities, street children and children living in urban slums and brothels are the most likely to find schools unavailable to them or lacking in relevance to their needs and circumstances. Among the potential solutions to the issues raised by Mr Ranjan were: the promotion of higher levels of public investment in education (at least 5-6% of GDP); more effectiveness, efficiency, and equity in the use of financial resources; and more efforts to improve quality. For urban education in particular, his recommendations were that special programmes should be undertaken in urban slums, including the introduction of the primary school stipend, the construction of temporary school buildings and better coordination with NGOs.

Discussion

The discussion in the education working group covered both formal and non-formal education. There was broad consensus about the importance of education and its critical role in urban development and poverty reduction. However, it was accepted that while the involvement of many different stakeholders is welcome, the urban education sector is too fragmented at present and public interventions – particularly in slum areas – need significant strengthening. Various solutions were suggested, with an emphasis on innovative approaches tailored to the specific needs of the urban poor. Throughout the discussion there were serious debates regarding the Constitutional right to education in Bangladesh and the requirement this places on Government to ensure that any barriers to education provision for the urban poor are overcome.

STRENGTHS

- National enrolment in primary education is currently at 91% and rates are rising in the secondary education sector
- All stakeholders are concerned about education and perceive it to be a critical development sector – *this includes a strong civil society group presence which provides an accountability mechanism*
- The existence of non-formal education which is responsive to current trends in education methodologies and better caters to the demands for education of the poorest and most excluded
- The new Education Policy is in the draft stage and specific inputs can be provided regarding access to education for poor urban children

CHALLENGES

- A sustainable education system cannot be achieved through non-formal education and NGO-run schools – *public schools are required*
- Too much fragmentation in the education system
- Inadequate accreditation and qualifications in the non-formal education sector
- No urban safety nets exist for extremely poor urban families which results in high drop-out rates and a gender preference in the school attendance of children
- Government's lack of interventions in urban slum areas due to issues relating to the legality of settlements

SUGGESTED ACTIONS

- Increase teacher-student contact hours – *there are not enough teachers and they are too busy with administrative obligations and duties*
- Introduce flexi-time system for urban schools
- Improve understanding of the opportunity and hidden costs in going to school in urban areas
- Adopt an inclusive approach to education with social safety nets to "catch" the drop outs
- Build temporary schools in urban slum settlements if legality is an issue – *these structures can be used for multiple purposes*
- Advocate for 6% of GDP to be spent on education – *separate basic education expenditure from other human resource development activities*
- Within the urban context, redefine quality education – *increase accessibility and quality simultaneously*

OUTCOMES

- The increasing retention of poor urban children in schools
- Ensuring the Constitutional right of every child to education
- Streamlining the education system for improved accreditation and harmonization
- Education as a means to end the cycle of poverty

ACTORS / STAKEHOLDERS

- Ministry of Education
- Ministry of Women and Children Affairs
- Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development and Cooperatives
- City Corporations and Pourashavas
- NGOs providing non-formal education and research institutions
- Development partners

Extreme Urban Poverty

Discussion

The discussion began with reflections on the complexity of targeting and monitoring the extreme poor in urban poverty programmes. Among the topics subsequently covered were: the need for better coordination between different stakeholders (government, development partners and NGOs); the importance of sharing lessons learned from different sectors; and the necessity of identifying and recognising successful interventions which have had a positive impact on the livelihoods of the extreme poor in urban areas.

Evidence Summary

- 24% of the urban population are living in extreme poverty
- Despite some progress in overall poverty reduction, extreme and chronic poverty persists and average per capita calorie and protein consumption in urban areas is declining
- The most disadvantaged urban poor are often the homeless who do not live in slums - pavement dwellers, construction workers, beggars etc.
- There are no social safety net programmes designed specifically for the urban extreme poor

CHALLENGES

- Lack of coordination between the agencies and programmes with responsibility for addressing the issues faced by the extreme poor
- The complexity of targeting and monitoring the impact of development programmes on the extreme poor in urban areas
- The absence of social safety net programmes (e.g. cash transfers) and other mechanisms for addressing the needs of the extreme poor in urban areas
- Lack of information about the location where poorest residents live - *data is needed at the household level*
- Lack of understanding of the issues faced by vulnerable and minority groups – *for example, sex workers, religious minorities and the disabled*
- Lack of understanding and knowledge among the middle class, elite and policy makers on how to address the problems faced by the extreme poor

SUGGESTED ACTIONS

• Undertake further research on defining extreme poverty in urban areas - *including developing different poverty lines for rural and urban poverty and extreme poverty*

• Fill the information gap on extreme poverty in urban areas – *gather or update national data on both the slum based extreme poor and the homeless population*

• Share information among different stakeholders on lessons learned regarding targeting and monitoring interventions focused on the extreme poor

• Ensure land security for the extreme poor – *the poorest groups are at particular risk of being marginalised or forced out of communities during processes of slum upgrading or tenure formalisation*

• Develop vocational training programmes to increase access to employment opportunities that are especially targeted at the extreme poor

• Learn lessons from addressing extreme poverty through social safety net programmes in rural areas and apply them in urban areas

• Improve the delivery of health programmes for the extreme poor in urban areas

• Learn lessons from successful programmes working with the urban extreme poor (e.g. Amrao Manush/'The pavement dwellers') and incorporate them into future approaches

• Advocate among government and development partners for more urban poverty programmes with a focus on the extreme poor

• Ensure the involvement of communities themselves in order to develop a comprehensive and effective approach to targeting the extreme poor and including them in poverty programmes

• Produce an inventory of programmes working with the extreme poor in urban areas

• Ensure the involvement and participation of the extreme poor in the decision–making process at every level

• Campaign to improve the understanding of the middle class, elites and policy makers regarding the extreme poor

Conclusion

Conclusion: Next Steps

On the final day of the event, the Conversation Memoire included as Appendix 1 of this report was drafted during a plenary session involving all the participants who took part in the Sylhet Conversation. Finalised during the fortnight following the event, the Memoire sets out a range of common understandings and shared commitments that reflect the discussions held over the two days and for which there was a broad consensus among delegates. The Memoire demonstrates the commitment to the promotion of urban poverty reduction and urban development of all those who took part in the event, and provides a starting point for developing a more consistent and strategic approach to reducing urban poverty in the future.

To ensure that in the short term the momentum from the Sylhet Conversation is not lost, following the drafting of the Memoire participants were requested to propose possible upcoming events and to recommend next steps for the LCG Urban Sector Working Group and other stakeholders to support efforts to reduce urban poverty in Bangladesh. The suggestions are presented below and, as a set of practical and constructive ideas on how to strengthen urban poverty reduction in Bangladesh, they form a fitting conclusion to this report.

I. Events

1. A special session should be prepared by the LCG Urban Sector Working Group at the upcoming Bangladesh Development Forum

2. World Urban Forum – the chance to present Bangladesh at the Forum should not be missed and the LCG Urban Sector Working Group should coordinate who will take part and in what capacity

3. A conference on land tenure should be held to promote discussion and debate on eviction and how to support alternative approaches

4. The LCG Urban Sector Working Group should consider holding a high level conference on urban poverty at the end of 2010

5. Extreme poverty day in October – this event should be used to raise awareness of urban poverty in a systematic and effective way

6. Greater numbers of the urban poor should be involved in the next LCG Urban Sector Working Group event and the Group should consider facilitating a separate forum where the urban poor can come together to discuss these issues

II. Networking

1. Other stakeholders concerned about urban poverty and urban planning should be contacted and involved in any subsequent work (e.g. the Municipal Association of Bangladesh, the Coalition for the Urban Poor, the Centre for Urban Studies, the Bangladesh Institute of Planners, architects etc.)

2. Community of practice – development partners, mayors, academics, and community-based organisations should have more face to face meetings and more contact. To keep the conversation alive, the UNDP would be willing to support such a network, beginning with a series of small conversations and leading towards a bigger event (e.g. at the end of the year)

3. Dialogue and debate to build a strong urban constituency should be supported and enhanced

4. Greater dialogue on urban governance and capacity development in also needed

III. Development Strategies

1. A draft of the Urban Policy Reform has been circulated among government agencies. There might be a window of opportunity to comment on the draft (although it is understood to be in its final stage) so, if invited by the Government, the LCG Urban Sector Working Group should provide coordinated and consolidated comments.

2. A dialogue on the next 5-Year Development Plan has started and the LCG Urban Sector Working Group should feed into this process as soon as possible.

IV. Mutual Learning and Innovations

1. An inventory of good practices should be developed - e.g. to collect examples of best practice at the municipal level - with 'horizontal' learning to be facilitated among the members of the LCG Urban Sector Working Group

2. A land tenure 'taskgroup' should be established and cooperation begun with one municipality as a pilot to demonstrate best practice in slum mapping, innovative leasing of land etc.

3. The 'urban environment' – air pollution, transport etc. – also needs special attention to ensure that it is given sufficient priority at Government level

V. Data collection and Monitoring

1. A comprehensive and shared definition of urban poverty and extreme urban poverty should be developed on a consensus basis within the LCG Urban Sector Working Group

2. The urban poor should be identified and provided with ID Cards to establish a proper register and monitoring system. This should be able to record those helped out of poverty and how this happened, not just how many urban poor there are.

3. The LCG Urban Sector Working Group should consider playing a coordinating role to facilitate the creation of data-bases, online libraries and other information resources

4. Accurate and efficient mapping should supported to improve land registers

5. Consensus should be sought across different agencies on slum mapping methodologies. The LCG Urban Sector Working Group should support the development of one methodology that is applied by everybody.

VI. LCG Urban Sector Working Group

1. The Terms of Reference for the LCG Urban Sector Working Group should be reviewed after the conversation, in negotiation with government

2. An strategic activity plan with milestones and prioritized actions should be developed for the LCG Urban Sector Working Group

Appendices

Appendix 1 _ Conversation Memoire

Conversation Memoire

The participants of the Conversation Event on "Urban Poverty and Development in Bangladesh", held in Sylhet on January 15th and 16th, 2010, commit themselves to advance the reduction of urban poverty according to the NSAPR II and the Millennium Development Goals, and pursue the reduction of urban poverty in relevant planning documents of the Government of Bangladesh (GoB), such as the upcoming 6th Five-Year Plan and the draft urban sector policy. We believe that effective urban poverty reduction is central to addressing the development needs of Bangladesh.

The participants recognize that the urban poor are resilient, vibrant and highly motivated people who are capable of improving their own condition and that of their communities. They are an important resource to Bangladesh development representing a large proportion of Bangladesh's overall current and future human capital potential. However, realizing their full potential requires specific attention and support from relevant policy and decision makers, institutions, programmes and mechanisms which ensure voice and provide tenure security, skills building, social safety nets development incentives, and investments in infrastructure and ensure access to justice and basic services.

It was agreed that the LCG Urban Sector Working Group has to support:

1. Identifying and building up GoB institution(s) to champion urban poverty reduction.

2. The GoB to address the needs of the urban poor and further the decentralization of responsibilities and budgets to local government authorities providing them with more autonomy to improve their services for the poor.

3. Efforts by national and local government, international agencies civil society (including poor urban communities) and the private sector to enhance cooperation for a comprehensive and integrated approach to urban poverty reduction.

4. The GoB in its plan to eradicate urban poverty, especially extreme poverty, and to realize the rights of the urban poor.

5. The GoB to increase the budget allocation and improve access to basic services for the urban poor, and enhance the capacities of local governments to coordinate the different sectors.

6. The GoB taking greater action and implementing more programmes to attain equality and equity for everyone, regardless of gender, and for all socially excluded groups.

7. The participation of all the poor, including people of different ages, minorities and other disadvantaged groups, in addressing their specific needs at every decision-making level.

The participants recognize:

1. The need for urgent collective action to achieve a national agenda for urban poverty reduction consistent with Universal Human Rights and the fundamental rights enshrined in the Constitution.

2. That participation of the urban poor in decision-making that affects their lives and livelihoods is fundamental to sustainable and equitable urban development.

3. The need to promote the right to information as an essential contribution towards the establishment of strong, representative and effective community organizations and other development agencies.

4. The need to improve the legal and institutional framework for equitable urban development, tenure security and basic service delivery.

Commitments

The participants committed themselves to:

1. advocate for policies and programmes that ensure people's rights and wellbeing in urban areas and promote effective and sustained processes of overcoming urban poverty

2. champion for a lead institution for urban development

3. promote the take up of outcomes from this conversation event with decision makers, civil society and international agencies, and determine strategies and milestones for the LCG Urban Sector Sub Group going forward (including a list of priority actions)

4. involve the poor in the development and implementation of policies and programmes that affect them;

5. support the creation of comprehensive urban datasets owned by GoB, including: a comprehensive inventory and mapping of slums; baseline socio-economic indicators and regular surveys of slums; a system to identify vulnerable groups with particular needs; and a data bank for the urban poor

6. develop integrated and innovative intervention strategies to enable effective responses to the needs of the urban poor (such as cash transfers in urban areas)

7. advocate for the inclusion of urban poverty reduction strategies in the sixth Five Year Plan and the Urban Sector Policy Reform and support the production of a joint GoB/UN report on Urban Poverty and the Millenium Development Goals;

8. conduct a research review and inventory of policies related to urban development to provide evidence to support GoB in undertaking effective urban policies

9. ensure better linkages between development programmes in rural and urban areas

10. support the development of strong management systems in urban local government institutions

We commit to this Conversation Memoire to promote poverty reduction strategies in urban development and to recognize the need for a consistent approach to reduce urban poverty.

16. January 2010.

Attendees

1. Abdul Hamid Fakir, Chairman, NDBUS
2. Abu Bakkar Siddique, Division Chief, Physical Infrastructure Division, Planning Commission
3. Alexander Jachnow, Principal Adviser, Good Urban Governance, GTZ
4. Ali Ahmed, National Project Director, UPPRP, LGED
5. Angury Begum, Community Leader, Community Development Committee
6. Ashekur Rahman, Urban Expert, Local Poverty Reduction Cluster, UNDP
7. Azahar Ali, National Project Coordinator, UPPR, UNDP
8. Babar Kabir, Director WASH, BRAC
9. Badar Uddin Ahmed Kamran, Mayor, Sylhet City Corporation
10. Chemon Ara Begum, Member of Parliament, Parliament of Bangladesh
11. Debashis Ranjan Saha, Education Specialist, UNICEF
12. Prof. Dr Diana Mitlin, Chronic Poverty Research Centre, University of Manchester
13. Dr. S. Ishteaque Ali Jinnah, Director, Policy Advocacy, Wateraid
14. Fatema Akter, Member, NDBUS
15. G. K. Gaus, Mayor, Habiganj Pourashava
16. Golam Mosaddeque, Senior Assistant, Chief Ministry of Housing and Public Works
17. Habibur Rahman, Senior Program Manager, KFW
18. Hamidul Islam Chowdhury, Adviser Urban Governance, GTZ
19. Hans D. Spruijt, Chief, Water & Environmental Sanitation Section, UNICEF
20. Imamur Rahman, Programme Coordinator, Wateraid
21. Johan Willert, First Secretary (Urban Environment and Climate Change), Embassy of Sweden
22. K. A. Jayaratne, International Adviser, UPPR, UNDP
23. Kirthi Ramesh, Young Professional, GTZ
24. Kishore Kumar Singh, Int. Extreme Poverty Adviser, UPPR, UNDP
25. Lenka Vojtová, Advisor Conversation Event, GTZ
26. Mark Ellery, WSS Specialist, WSP (World Bank)
27. Masuda Binte Kadir, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Social Welfare
28. Matthew Walsham, Consultant, LCG

29. Md. Abu Bakr Siddique, Project Director, UPHCP II
30. Md. Akhtaruzzaman, Country Team Leader, WSP (World Bank)
31. Md. Anisur Rahman, Deputy Secretary, LGD
32. Md. Golam Mustafa, Town Manager, Sylhet, UPPR, UNDP
33. Md. Haroon-or Rashid Biswas, Senior Assistant Secretary, LGD
34. Md. Hasan Iman, National Project Director, Guchhogram (CVRP) Project
35. Md. Nazmul Hasan, Additional Chief Engineer, LGED
36. Md. Nurullah, Project Director, UGIIP2, LGED
37. Mir Rashed Sohel, Project Support Manager, GTZ
38. Mirza Abu Taher Engr., Additional Chief Engineer, Public Works Department, Sylhet PWD Zone
39. Mohammad Shahajahan, Mayor, Barguna Pourashava
40. Monirul Alam, Water & Environmental Sanitation Officer, UNICEF
41. Monzur Hossain, Secretary, Secretary, LGD
42. Mostofa Quaium Khan, Executive Director, Coalition for Urban Poor (CUP)
43. Mr. Nayeem Wahra, Team Leader, Save the Children Australia
44. Mr. Rafiqul Islam, Senior Project Implementation Officer, ADB
45. Nadia Tavares-Goodman, Consultant, LCG
46. Osman Goni Talukder, Deputy Chief, Ministry Of Women and Children Affairs
47. Philippa Thomas, Social Development Adviser, DfID
48. Pradip Kumar Saha, Senior Planning Officer-1, Bangladesh Railway
49. Prasanta Bhushan Barua, Joint Secretary, LGD
50. Richard Geier, Int. Programme Manager, UPPR, UNDP
51. Robert Juhkam, Deputy Country Director, UNDP
52. Shahana Siddique, Consultant, LCG
53. Shaikh Ahmed, Senior Economist, World Bank
54. Shaikh Md. Mehedi Ahsan, Regional Training Coordinator UGIIP2, GTZ
55. Sufia Akter, Cluster Leader, Community Development Committee
56. Zahid Khan, Senior Urban Specialist, World Bank
57. Zaki Md. Ziaul Islam, Programme Officer, JICA

Appendix 2 _ Event Programme

14TH JANUARY

Arrival & Reception at Nazimgarh Resort—Sylhet

15TH JANUARY - DAY 1

Welcome Session

Mr Alexander Jachnow - Co-Convener (GTZ)

Mr Robert Juhkam - Co-Convener (UNDP)

Mr Monzur Hossain - Secretary LGD, GoB, Chair LCG Urban Sector

Mr Badruddin Ahmed Kamran - Mayor of Sylhet City Corporation

Ms Chemon Ara Begum - MP

Introduction to Conversation Goals, overview of the programme

Presenter: Prof. Dr Diana Mitlin - Chronic Poverty Research Centre, University of Manchester

Session I: "The Challenges of Urban Poverty for Bangladesh - Scenario from a National Perspective"

Presenter: Abu Bakar Siddiqui - Planning Commission, Ministry of Planning

Discussion

Session II a: "Evidence for Action – Critical Areas for Urban Poverty Reduction" - In this session an overview of the eight critical areas of the briefing paper are presented.

Presenter: Matthew Walsham & Alexander Jachnow - Convening Chair, LCG Urban Sector

Session II b: "Evidence for Action – Addressing Extreme Urban Poverty" - In this session the specific implications in addressing the most vulnerable are presented.

Presenter: Kishore Kumar Singh (UPPR)

Session III: Discussion on Urban Poverty – what can be done, what are the areas and what are the prerequisites for action? - Preparation for group discussion in the afternoon

Facilitator: Prof. Dr Diana Mitlin

Working Group Session A: Thematic Discussions

Core Team Roles	Thematic Areas			
	Municipal Governance	Social Cohesion & Security	Rural-Urban Linkages	Land & Tenure
Moderator	Azahar Ali (UPPR)	Sheikh Ahmed (WB)	Philippa Thomas (DFiD)	Ashekur Rahman (UNDP)
Resource Person	Hamidul Islam Chowdhury (GTZ)	Chemon Ara Begum (Member of Parliament)	Mehedi Ahsan (GTZ)	K.A. Jayaratne (UPPR)
Note Taker	Kirthi Ramesh (GTZ)	Matthew Walsham	Shahana Siddiqui	Nadia Tavares-Goodman

Working Group Session B: Thematic Discussions

Thematic Areas				
Extreme Poverty	Labour Markets	Education	Urban Environment	Health
Ashekur Rahman (UPPR)	Haroon-or-Rashid Biswas (LGD)	Nayeem Wahra (Save the Children)	Johan Willert (SIDA)	Matthew Walsham
Kishore Kumar Singh (UPPR)	Baba Kabir (BRAC)	Debashish Ranjan (UNICEF)	Syed Ishteaque Ali Jinnah (WaterAid)	Md. Abu Bakkar Siddique (UPHCP)
Nadia Tavares-Goodman	Kirthi Ramesh (GTZ)	Shahana Siddiqui	Mehedi Ahsan (GTZ)	Azahar Ali (UPPR)

16TH JANUARY - DAY 2

Session IV: Presentation of Draft Sylhet Declaration on Urban Poverty

Presenter: Alexander Jachnow

Facilitator: Prof. Dr Diana Mitlin

Session V: Towards Action for Poverty Reduction: a vision for socially inclusive cities - Panel Discussion

Facilitator: Richard Geier

Panel discussion participants: Baba Kabir, Sufia Akhtar, Masuda Binte Kadir, Harun-or-Rashid Biswas, Md. Hasan Iman

Session VI: Presentation of Findings from Working Groups - In this session the findings of the working groups will be presented and discussed

Presenters: Working Group teams (max 8 minutes each, with 4 minutes time for clarification)

Facilitator: Prof. Dr Diana Mitlin

Next Steps (brain storming within the plenary):

i. proposals for upcoming events

ii. recommendations for the LCG Working Group

iii. recommendations for government and development partners in general.

Facilitators: Alexander Jachnow & Robert Juhkam (Co-Chairs LCG Urban Sector)

Appendix 3 _ "Achieving Vision 2021: Some strategic considerations for urban development in Bangladesh"

Carel de Rooy, UNICEF Representative

Achieving "Vision 2021", that is, attaining Middle Income status and halving of the proportion of the population living below the poverty threshold in Bangladesh, will require roughly doubling the per capita income. While agricultural production has the potential to increase substantially and become more diversified, rural jobs alone are unlikely to double the per capita income; rather, it will require expansion of the industrial and service sectors in urban areas. The attention provided to - and the evolution of - urban development in Bangladesh is therefore fundamental and *very closely linked* to whether or not Bangladesh realizes "Vision 2021". It is therefore highly recommended that the sixth 5-year National Development Plan incorporates a robust urban vision and plan.

In this regard, and as a contribution to the overall conversation on urban poverty reduction and development documented throughout this report, set out below are a number of observations on challenges, opportunities and potential solutions regarding the role of urban development in achieving the long-term strategic goal of Vision 2021.

Evidence for the need for a robust urban development policy in Bangladesh

- 2.5% urban population growth versus 1.4% overall population growth
- 1/3 of current urban population in the six largest cities are slum dwellers - *most with neither land tenure nor legal status*
- The "calorie intake" of the urban poor being lower than the rural poor highlights the enormous disparity/inequities emerging within cities
- Climate-change related urbanization (rural-urban migration) could be exacerbated in the future.
- The development literature has highlighted that high GINI coefficients (income disparity) are closely linked to violence and crime and are a major deterrent to development.

Opportunities for a robust urban development policy in Bangladesh

- The urban sector produces the majority share of GDP and this trend is growing – *urban areas are the main engines of economic growth*
- Urbanization is driven by employment opportunities for the rural poor

• Urban – rural remittances: the urban poor with a stable income are more likely to invest in their villages

• 7.5 times higher population density in urban slums than urban population as a whole makes investment in slums highly efficient

• Employment intensive infrastructure improvement during slum upgrading has significant potential

• Many private and civil society actors already intervene in slum areas: public-private partnerships therefore have a huge potential in such areas. The Government can contract out services.

• Potential for more effective cash transfer programmes given the ease of targeting the urban poor through geographic targeting i.e. targeting slums and poor urban settlements.

• Large tracts of unused or under-used "khas" land holdings within Pourashavas and their peripheries

Challenges for a robust urban development policy in Bangladesh

The Awami League Manifesto hardly mentions the urban dimension. It therefore needs to be given a much higher profile politically and also in the country's strategic development planning process - that is, in the sixth 5-year National Development Plan – to address, among other things, the following challenges:

• The archaic legal framework for urban development

• The question of land-tenure for the poor urban population, which is the structural cause of their marginalized status and their inability to fully contribute to national development.

• The absence/scarcity of government services for the urban poor. For example, The Health Nutrition and Population Sector Program framework hardly includes health services for the urban poor

• The second Primary Education Development Programme similarly lacks any focus on urban issues. This is particularly problematic because the opportunity costs for poor children to access formal primary education are far too high and working children and street children need access to special non-formal basic education and vocational training to enhance their potential.

• The urban poor have very limited access to justice and law enforcement – they are frequently left in the hands of "mastaans" (gang leaders) who exploit them and their level of trust in law enforcement and the justice system is very low

• Physical infrastructure improvements cannot be sustained unless persistent governance problems are addressed.

• Micro-credit has acknowledged limitations in reaching the extreme poor.

Potential solution/actions to be included in an urban policy

Given the close linkage between the urban dimension and the realization of *"Vision 2021"*, the urban question should be *at the heart of the sixth 5-year development plan* and not dealt with through a separate urban strategy which runs the risk of being marginalized.... something the Government of Bangladesh and the country cannot risk. Key areas for action that could be incorporated into the plan include:

• De-concentration of major urban centres towards Pourashavas (see details below)

• Urgent reform and upgrading of the legal framework

• Making land tenure a top priority to be addressed as without this no sustainable progress can be expected. *Insecure tenure is often an exclusion criterion for development programmes.*

• Placing an emphasis on public-private partnerships as the way forward in terms of service delivery in different sectors, at least in the initial stage.

• Pursuing specific "geographic targeting" of the urban poor by social safety net mechanisms and basic services to reduce inequities, and accelerate progress in achieving the Millennium Development Goals and reducing poverty.

Decentralization and de-concentration

A more equitable and effective development process in Bangladesh would require not only a de-centralization of government but also a *de-concentration of the urban development process* as a first step in diffusing urban growth. The second strategy depends on the effectiveness of the first, plus of course the provision of infrastructure and access to services - energy, water supply, quality health and education services etc. It is understood that several Pourashavas have space available for further physical expansion. Should the government then not favour a strategy to establish different *"growth zones poles"*:

• For the garment industry (two or three Pourashavas);

• Small industrial production (two or three other Pourashavas)

• For energy (in the north, close to the coal deposits, but exploring the development of renewable energy resources as well);

• A tea research and production hub in the northeast;

• Shipping in/near Chittagong

• Tourism in Cox's Bazaaar and CHT

• Central government and HQs of the services sector could be retained in Dhaka

Once the *"development poles"* are selected on a rational basis - including energy and land availability, connectivity, vocational and developmental concerns such as job creation, - de-concentration could be achieved through gradually increasing fiscal disincentives for "undesired" industries to move out of Dhaka and other City Corporations, added to strong fiscal incentives for industries to move into the pre-determined *"development poles"*. This approach would not only create urban jobs outside the six City Corporations, but it would also substantially enhance the urban-rural linkages so crucial for the country's development process.

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Appendix 5 _ Table of Urban Projects - Governance

Project Name	Organizational Information	Thematic Area	Duration	Project Summary
Local Partnerships for Urban Poverty Alleviation Project**	GoB, UNDP, UN HABITAT	**	**	** See Infrastructure table for more information
Urban Partnerships for Poverty Reduction **	GoB, UNDP (DFID)	**	**	** See Infrastructure table for more information
Second Urban Governance and Infrastructure Improvement Project**	GoB, ADB, KFW,GTZ	**	**	** See Infrastructure table for more information
Secondary Towns Integrated Flood Protection Phase-2 Project **	GoB, ADB, OPEC	**	**	** See Environment table for more information
Municipal Services Project **	GoB, World Bank	**	**	** See Infrastructure table for more information
Urban Governance and Infrastructure Improvement (UGIIP)	GoB, ADB, GTZ	Municipal Governance + Infrastructure	2003-2009	The project aimed to assist Pourashavas to enhance Municipal management and strengthen capabilities in the provision of municipal services and to develop and expand municipal structures and urban services to increase economic opportunities. http://www.adb.org
Participation of the Urban Poor in Municipal Governance	GoB, ADB	Municipal Governance	2006-2008	The goal was to enhance capabilities of the urban poor in selected municipalities to access quality urban services, by establishing i) institutional mechanisms to increase the access of the urban poor in decision-making processes; and ii) adopt participatory pro-poor planning and monitoring systems. http://www.adb.org
Enhancing Municipal Governance for Poverty Reduction (EMGPR)	GoB, GTZ	Municipal Governance	2008-2010	The project is developing an instrument for better data collection and the assessment of poor urban settlements to assist in targeting the extreme poor population and supporting the implementation of social transfers.
Second Urban Governance and Infrastructure Improvement Project (UGIIP2)	GoB, ADB, KFW,GTZ	Municipal Governance + Infrastructure	2008-2014	This project supports the improvement of urban governance and of infrastructure and service delivery in medium sized municipalities. Investment funds will be utilized to improve municipal transport, drainage, solid waste management, water supply, sanitation, municipal facilities, and basic services in slums. http://www.adb.org/Projects/

Table of Urban Projects - Environment

Project Name	Organizational Information	Thematic Area	Duration	Project Summary
Community-based Project for the Urban Poor **	GoB, UNICEF	**	**	** See Health table for more information
Slum Improvement Programme (SIP) **	GoB, UNICEF	**	**	** See Health table for more information
Urban Basic Services Delivery Project (USDBP) and Support for Basic Services in Urban Areas Project (SBSUAP) **	GoB, UNICEF	**	**	** See Health table for more information
Urban Development Project	GoB, World Bank	Environment + Land & Housing	1988-1998	The project consisted of three components: environmental improvements, area development and basic shelter, and institutional development. http://www.worldbank.org
Secondary Towns Integrated Flood Protection Project	GOB, ADB	Environment + Flood Protection + Governance	1991-N/A	The Project was consistent with the Government's Flood Action Plan and Fourth 5-Year Plan (1991–1995). It was also in line with ADB's operational strategy for Bangladesh in the early 1990s, which focused on developing urban infrastructure and improving the environment to benefit the urban poor. http://www.adb.org
Secondary Towns Integrated Flood Protection Phase-2 Project	GoB,ADB, OPEC	Environment + Flood Protection + Governance	2005-2011	This project has two expected outcomes: i) relatively flood-free and secure living environment within the framework of integrated flood protection and ii) Improved urban governance for sustainable urban service delivery. http://www.adb.org
Clean Air and Sustainable Environment Project	GoB, World Bank	Environment + Traffic Management	2009-2014	This project supports changes in the institutional, legal and regulatory framework regarding industrial pollution. It promotes the adoption of cleaner technologies and practices in brick manufacturing. The transport component involves small investments in traffic engineering and management measures. http://www.worldbank.org

Table of Urban Projects - Poverty Reduction

Project Name	Organizational Information	Thematic Area	Duration	Project Summary
Urban Partnerships for Poverty Reduction (UPPR) **	GoB, UNDP (DFID)	**	**	** See Infrastructure table for more information
Second Urban Primary Health Care Project (UPHCP2) **	GoB, ADB (DFID, SIDA and UNFPA)	**	**	** See Health table for more information
Appropriate Resources for Improving Street Children's Environment (ARISE)	GoB, UNDP	Poverty Reduction + Social Protection	1999-2007	The objective was to address the needs and problems of the street children in Bangladesh in order to integrate them into the mainstream of the society in accordance with the provisions of the United Nations Child Rights Convention (UNCRC)
Protection of Children at Risk (PCAR)	GoB, UNICEF	Poverty Reduction + Social Protection	2007-2010	A continuation of the ARISE project to promote livelihood options and social protection for vulnerable children http://www.unicef.org/bangladesh/4926_4959.htm
Stimulating Households Income for Economic Empowerment (SHIREE)	GoB, DFID	Poverty Reduction	2008-2016	Primarily rural programme focusing on the extreme poor that also targets to a lesser extent the urban population. http://www.shiree.org/
Social Economic Transformation of the Ultra Poor (SETU)	GoB, DFID, CARE Bangladesh	Poverty Reduction + Food + Basic Services + Private Sector Growth	2009-2012	Aims to lift 80,000 disadvantaged people out of extreme poverty by 2015 through facilitating collective action by the extreme poor and the institutionalization of poverty reduction initiatives by the local state. http://www.care.org/careswork/projects/BGD092.asp

Table of Urban Projects - Health

Project Name	Organizational Information	Thematic Area	Duration	Project Summary
Advancing Sustainable Environmental Health (ASEH) Project **	GoB, Water AID (DFID)	**	**	** See Water & Sanitation table for more information
Sanitation, Hygiene Education and Water Supply in Bangladesh (SHEWA-B) **	GoB, UNICEF (DFID)	**	**	** See Water & Sanitation table for more information
Community-based Project for the Urban Poor	GoB, UNICEF	Health + Environment	1982-1985	This project aimed to deliver basic services to the urban poor through community participation
Slum Improvement Programme (SIP)	GoB, UNICEF	Health + Environment + Gender	1982-1992	This project was a community-based effort to improve the slum environment, provide primary health care, and empower poor women living in these communities. http://web.mit.edu/urbanupgrading/upgrading/case-examples/ce-BG-slu.html
Urban Basic Services Delivery Project (USDBP) and Support for Basic Services in Urban Areas Project (SBSUAP)	GoB, UNICEF	Health + Environment+ Education	Phase I: 1996-2000 Phase II: 2001-2006	These projects focused on social mobilisation, community participation, skills development, service convergence and provision of health and educational services. Both projects involved the establishment of Urban Development Centres.
Multidisciplinary HIV/AIDS Programme in Chittagong, Rajshahi,	GoB, GTZ	Health	2004-2008	The project objective is to improve prevention, diagnosis, consultation and treatment of STDs and HIV/AIDS in Chittagong, Khulna, Rajshahi and Sylhet. http://www.gtz.de
Municipal Health Partnership Program (MHPP)	GoB, Concern (USAID)	Health	2004-2009	The goal of MHPP was to reduce maternal and child morbidity and mortality. The project worked in close partnership with nine municipalities. http://www.ehproject.org/PDF/ehkm/concern_bangladesh-municipal_health_evaluation.pdf
Smiling Sun Franchise Programme	GoB, USAID	Health	2004-2011	SSFP aims to expand the availability of sustainable NGO-provided health services and products and to support the GoB to achieve its population and health targets. http://www.smilingsunhealth.com/

Second Urban Primary Health Care Project (UPHCP2)	GoB, ADB (DFID, SIDA and UNFPA)	Health + Poverty Reduction	2005-2011	The project's primary objective is to improve the health of the urban poor and reduce preventable mortality and morbidity, especially among women and children by increasing access to primary health care services. http://www.uphcp.org
Block Grant to Marie Stopes International	GoB, Marie Stopes (EC)	Health	2006-2008	The project aimed to improve the health (especially the sexual and reproductive health) status of poor men, women and adolescents in selected urban areas of Dhaka, Chittagong and Khulna Division. http://www.delbangladesh.eu/en/projects/health_projects.htm#three
Manoshi Urban Maternal Newborn and Child Health programme	GoB, BRAC (Gates Foundation)	Health	2007-2011	The programme is designed to significantly improve the maternal, neonatal and child health situation and to benefit approximately eight million urban poor living in slums in the six major cities of Bangladesh. Http://www.icddrb.org
Urban Public and Environmental Health Sector Development Program (UPEHSDP)	GoB, ADB	Health	2010 - 2016	This project will assisst in improving the public and environmental health conditions in urban areas of Bangladesh, especially in six City Corporations (Dhaka, Chittagong, Rajshahi, Khulna, Sylhet and Barisal). http://www.adb.org

Table of Urban Projects - Infrastructure

Project Name	Organizational Information	Thematic Area	Duration	Project Summary
Urban Governance and Infrastructure Improvement (UGIIP & UGIIP 2) **	GoB, ADB	**	**	** See Governance table for more information
Advancing Sustainable Environmental Health (ASEH) Project **	GoB, Water Aid (DFID)	**	**	** See Water & Sanitation table for more information
Dhaka Water Supply and Sanitation Project **	GoB, World Bank	**	**	** See Water & Sanitation table for more information
Secondary Towns Infrastructure Development Project II	GoB, ADB	Infrastructure + Environment + Waste Management	1996-2003	The project aimed to provide infrastructure to meet basic human needs, strengthen the capacity of local authorities to generate higher levels of municipal revenues needed to sustain investments in urban infrastructure, reduce poverty, improvement the environment, and implement pilot projects in privatization of solid waste management. http://www.adb.org/Documents/PCRs/BAN/pcr-ban-24134.pdf
Dhaka Urban Transport	GoB, World Bank	Infrastructure + Transport	1999-2005	The objectives of the programme were: a) to improve urban transport infrastructure and services in the Dhaka Metropolitan Area (DMA); and b) to strengthen the institutional and policy framework and address long-term transport planning and coordination issues in the DMA. http://www.worldbank.org
Municipal Services Project	GoB, World Bank	Infrastructure + Governance	1999-2011	This project supports the Government to finance basic infrastructure, such as water supply, roads, drains and street lighting. It also supports the strengthening of the financial and institutional capacities of municipalities and City Corporations. http://www.worldbank.org
Local Partnerships for Urban Poverty Alleviation Project (LPUPAP)	GoB, UNDP, UN HABITAT	Infrastructure + Governance	2000-2006	The objective of this project was to alleviate poverty in 450 urban communities in seven Pourashavas (municipalities) and four City Corporations through community empowerment and capacity-building for local governments, NGOs and community-based organisations.

Dhaka Water Supply Sector Development Program	GoB, ADB	Infrastructure	2007-2014	The project will contribute to the sustainable provision and operation of urban water supply services in Dhaka, by rehabilitating and strengthening the water supply system based on the long-term policy and investment roadmap. http://pid.adb.org/pid/LoanView.htm?projNo=39405&seqNo=01&typeCd=3
Urban Partnerships for Poverty Reduction (UPPR)	GoB, UNDP (DFID)	Infrastructure + Governance + Poverty Reduction	2007-2015	UPPR supports comprehensive slum upgrading in 30 cities and towns in Bangladesh, by providing basic infrastructure and an extensive set of actions aimed at employment generation for the urban poor. http://www.upprbd.org
City Region Development Project	GoB, ADB	Infrastructure	2010-N/A	This project is expected to provide integrated support for infrastructure development and institutional reform. Institutional development will focus on enhancement of citizen participation and modernization of financial and tax management. http://pid.adb.org/pid/TaView.htm?projNo=39298&seqNo=01&typeCd=2
Dhaka Environment and Water Resources Management Project	GoB, World Bank	Infrastructure	2010-N/A	This project will address industrial wastewater management at a national level, and by municipal authorities and the private sector, through a combination of investments in environmental management capacity and monitoring infrastructure.

Table of Urban Projects - Others

Project Name	Organizational Information	Thematic Area	Duration	Project Summary
Safer Cities	GoB, UNDP, UN HABITAT	Gender + Empowerment + Safety	2002-2003	The project goal was to empower poor urban women to break away from the vicious cycle of poverty. http://www.unhabitat.org/content.asp?cid=1656&catid=404&typeid=13&subMenuId=0
Urban Disaster Mitigation Project (BUDMP)	GoB, Care, USAID	Disaster Mitigation	2004-N/A	The project is exploring methods to reduce the vulnerability of urban populations to floods in two secondary cities in Bangladesh through flood mitigation measures. http://209.85.135.132/search?q=cache:B0OejxsDuAcJ:www.adpc.net/audmp/wgm/2000/notes/bd/proposal.pdf+Shahar+Project+Bangladesh+USAID&cd=6&hl=pt-BR&ct=clnk
Basic Education for Hard to Reach Urban Working Children I	GoB, UNICEF	Education	1997-2004	The project provided education to 346,000 children aged from 8 to 14 in six City Cooperations who were provided with a two-year basic education course, which was equivalent to grade three of government primary education.
Basic Education for Hard to Reach Urban Working Children II	GoB, UNICEF	Education	2005-2012	The project aims at providing non-formal education to 351,000 urban working children. It provides children of 10-14 years working in hazardous occupations basic education up to grade 3 over a two year period. http://www.unicef.org
Early Learning for Children Development Project	GoB/UNICEF	Education	2006-2010	The project aims to ensure that the most vulnerable and disavantaged children receive age appropriate care, and to support their early learning skills and prepare them for primary school.
Strengthening Household Abilities for Responding to Development Opportunities (SHOUHARDO)	GoB, USAID, CARE Bangladesh	Food Security	2004-2010	The goal of the SHOUHARDO project is to sustainably reduce the chronic and transitory food insecurity of 400,000 vulnerable households in both urban and rural settings in 18 districts of Bangladesh. http://www.care.org

Clean Dhaka Project	GoB, JICA	Solid Waste management	2007-2011	This project aims to provide capacity development to improve the solid waste management services of Dhaka City Corporation. http://www.worldbank.org
Municipal Services Additional Financing	GoB, World Bank	Transport + Water & Sanitation + Flood Protection	2008-N/A	http://web.worldbank.org/external/projects/main?pagePK=64283627&piPK=73230&theSitePK=40941&menuPK=228424&Projectid=P110282
Comprehensive Disaster Management Programme (CDMP)	GoB, UNDP, DFID	Climate Change	2003-2009	This project aimed to strengthen disaster response and management capacity through interventions in six key areas, with a focus on marginalized and vulnerable communities in urban centres and in 2000 Union Parishads in 40 high-risk districts of Bangladesh. http://www.cdmp.org.bd/
Comprehensive Disaster Management Programme (CDMP) II	GoB, UNDP, DFID	Climate Change	2010-2014	This project aims to strengthen disaster response and management capacity through interventions in six key areas, with a focus on marginalized and vulnerable communities in urban centres and in 2000 Union Parishads in 40 high-risk districts of Bangladesh. http://www.cdmp.org.bd/
Mirpur Dhaka Bastuhara Project	GoB	Housing		This project was a government-led low-income housing project

Table of Urban Projects - Water and Sanitation

Project Name	Organizational Information	Thematic Area	Duration	Project Summary
Municipal Services Additional Financing **	GoB, World Bank	**	**	** See others table for more information
Dhaka Water Supply and Sanitation Project **	GoB, World Bank	**	**	** See Infrastructure table for more information
Fourth Dhaka Water Supply Project	GoB, World Bank	Water Supply & Sanitation	1996-2002	The main goals were a) to commence an institutional reform program; b) to increase the life of existing assets and reduce water losses; c) to strengthen water resources management; and d) to increase potable water supply. http://web.worldbank.org/
Environmental Sanitation, Hygiene and Water Supply in Urban Slums and Fringes Project	GoB, UNICEF	Water Supply & Sanitation	1999-2006	This project worked to promote better hygiene and sanitation behaviors in slum communities through the establishment of adolescent groups, women's courtyard meetings, school hygiene brigades and men's advocacy groups
Advancing Sustainable Environmental Health (ASEH) Project	GoB, Water AID (DFID)	Water Supply & Sanitation + Infrastructure + Health	2005-2010	This project helps communities in slum areas to establish communal self-managed water points and sanitation blocks, and develop a good understanding of safe hygiene. The project covers Dhaka, Chittagong and some secondary cities. http://www.wateraid.org
Secondary Towns Water Supply and Sanitation (Sector) Project	GoB, ADB	Water Supply & Sanitation	2007-2013	This project will develop a new surface water treatment plant and associated transmission and distribution networks in Dhaka city. http://www.adb.org
Dhaka Water Supply and Sanitation Project	GoB, World Bank	Water Supply & Sanitation + Infrastructure	2008-2013	The objective is to improve the sustainable delivery of storm water drainage, wastewater and water services by the Dhaka Water Supply and Sewerage Authority (DWASA) to the population of Dhaka. Http://www.worldbank.org
Dhaka Water Supply Sector Development Program II	GoB, ADB	Water Supply	2011-N/A	This US$280 million project will develop a new surface water treatment plant and associated transmission and distribution networks in Dhaka City. http://www.adb.org
Sanitation, Hygiene Education and Water Supply in Bangladesh (SHEWA-B)	GoB, UNICEF (DFID)	Water Supply & Sanitation + Health	2007-2011	This project aims to reduce mortality, morbidity and malnutrition due to water and excreta related diseases, especially among un/under served poor women and children in urban slums in 19 municipalities in Bangladesh .

DFID Department for International Development

kfw ENTWICKLUNGSBANK

gtz

COOPERATION PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF BANGLADESH FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY

UNDP Bangladesh

THE WORLD BANK

JICA

wsp water and sanitation program

unicef

Sida SWEDISH INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION AGENCY

Australian Government AusAID

ADB

গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার

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