

Report on
Mid-term Evaluation of the Project titled
“Education and Health for Child Waste Pickers”



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Dhaka
22 July 2017

List of Acronyms

BLF	Big Lottery Fund
CAMPE	Campaign for Popular Education
CH	ChildHope
DD	Deputy Director
DPE	Directorate of Primary Education
GUC	Gram Bangla Unnayan Committee
MTE	Mid Term Evaluation
NGO	Non-governmental Organisation
PR	Public Relations
RMG	Readymade Garments
SHG	Self-help Group
TEO	Thana Education Officer
TVET	Trade and Vocational Education and Training
UK	United Kingdom
Union Parishad	Union Council (smallest administrative unit in Bangladesh)

Executive Summary

This is the report on the mid-term evaluation (MTE) of the project “Education and Health for Child Waste Pickers” being implemented in Bangladesh by the Gram Bangla Unnayan Committee (GUC) as a partner of ChildHope (UK). This 3.5-year project started its operations in July 2015.

The approach to collection and analyses of information for the MTE was participatory and comprehensive in that it covered all related stakeholders. Reference was also made to all related secondary information created and maintained by GUC and Nari Maitree.

Output-wise Achievements:

The output-wise performance of the project was satisfactory, especially because the project design provided for some ground work in Year 1 for the project to be established. Low achievements were made against a few activities, while optimal achievements or over-achievements were made against a number of activities.

Effectiveness of Approaches Followed:

The GUC School and its students have been generously accepted by the parents, surrounding communities and the local government. Cooperation between the local education office and GUC has been instrumental in mainstreaming students from the GUC School. These students have been well-accepted by their new schoolmates, and no discrimination against them has been reported. Their studies in schools has catalyzed positive lifestyle changes among them and their family members. One of the factors that motivated the parents to send their children to the schools has been their access to cost-free education.

The TVET Centre at Matuail is vibrant, especially because of the popularity of its Tailoring training Section. Three particular sections- Food processing, Jute and Paper Bags, and Cell Phone Repairing- have closed down due to their low-level attraction to the target children. Though it was targeted to open a Beauty Parlour Training Section, no such section could be opened till Year 2. A few children got employed at home and abroad in tailoring profession. Their newly acquired skills also enhanced their bargaining power with their employers.

A number of self-help groups (SHGs) have been formed. They have been saving their money with local banks in order to use the savings in future in profitable businesses. They themselves operate their bank accounts, despite being semi-literate or illiterate. To enable the groups to self-manage, GUC has provided them with trainings on SHG Accounting, Healthy Cooking, Assessing Eligibility for Loans, Managing SHGs, Nutrition, and Childcare. SHG By-laws for management of SHGs have also been framed on a democratic basis. The involvement of the mothers in SHGs has enhanced their dynamism in efforts to look for opportunities to engage into decent occupations.

Factors behind the Key Successes:

The major factors that played significant roles in paving the way to major successes are:

- Strong sense of integrity among the members of the target waste-picker families at Matuail;
- High opinion of the local communities about the need for and potential effectiveness of the project;
- The Government's generous subsidies to the mainstream schools that motivated parents of the students of the GUC School to send their children to schools;
- GUC's access to training of teachers by an NGO named Campaign for Popular
- Visits of the students (at the GUC School) to some of the neighbouring mainstream schools;
- Support provided by the Parents' Welfare Groups to ensuring their children's regular attendance at schools;
- GUC's enhanced PR at the field level; and
- Emergence of numerous small-scale RMG factories around the project area opening employment opportunities to the adolescent trainees in tailoring at GUC 's TVET Centre.

GUC's Organisational Capacity:

GUC could employ enough staff of the required specifications as per the project design. Recruitments were made timely. Clear-cut organization structures existed at both GUC headquarters and at the project area. Lines of communication and coordination were predetermined, with provisions for flexibilities. All aspects of office operations and project implementation were backed by a number of pre-set operations manuals. Nari Maitree, carrying out activities against Outcome 2, was well-represented in the project management structure. Representation of the project outside the project was accomplished both individually by specific staff and in the form of various meetings and conventions. ChildHope's support with frequent visits by its Partnerships and Project manager was effective toward smooth project implementation.

Challenges Faced and Lessons Learnt:

The following challenges were faced and lessons drawn from them:

- a) There are a very few disabled adolescents to be included into the project;
- b) The distances between the GUC School and the residences of the target children is problematic for many of these children;
- c) Need for some girls to work on household chores at their homes is a setback to their attendance at schools;
- d) The Government, as its policy, is not in a position to provide stipend to GUC School's students;
- e) Nari Maitree faced difficulties in involving enough children in training on different trades other than tailoring (Viability of such trainings may not have been sufficiently carried out prior to project designing);
- f) Withdrawal of the target mothers and their families from waste-picking business will take a relatively long time, because this is an easy and relatively more lucrative occupation for them (Attainment of sustainable subsistence economy is catching up slowly); and
- g) It is difficult for the SHG members to attend their periodic meetings due to their deep and laborious involvements in their own economic activities to their living.

Recommendations:

- i) Interactions with the mothers should be enhanced

- ii) Case studies on successful child waste-pickers should be cited to all the waste-pickers for their motivation to positively change their lives
- iii) Grading of positively changed families should be done for better motivation of the community of waste-pickers
- iv) Reception should be accorded to those students who have been mainstreamed
- v) Some of the suitable child waste-pickers should be absorbed in the project as Volunteers
- vi) The parents should be brought into more interactive processes, so they accept the positive advice of their children
- vii) Revisit should be made to the design and feasibility of the trainings on various trades, as designed at the initial phase of the project
- viii) More emphasis should be attached to (a) growth of further leadership (democratic) and (b) growth of second line of leadership in the SHGs.

Table of Contents

1. INTRODUCTION
2. BACKGROUND OF THE PROJECT
3. PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES OF THE EVALUATION
4. SCOPE AND METHODOLOGY OF THE EVALUATION
5. MAJOR FINDINGS
 - 5.1 Output-Level Achievements
 - 5.2 Effectiveness of the Approaches Followed
 - 5.3 Factors behind the Key Successes
 - 5.4 GUC's Organisational Capacity
 - 5.5 Inter-partner Relationship Patterns
 - 5.6 Challenges Faced and Lessons Learnt
6. Recommendations
 - 6.1 Conclusions
 - 6.2 Recommendations

ANNEXES:

- I : Terms of Reference
- II : List of Persons Met
- III : By-laws of Surjamukhi SHG
- IV : List of Mainstreamed Students
- V : List of Beneficiaries Covered by SSN through GUC's Support

1. INTRODUCTION

This is the report on the mid-term evaluation of the project “Education and Health for Child Waste Pickers”, being implemented in Bangladesh by the Gram Bangla Unnayan Committee (GUC) as a partner of ChildHope (UK). The project is being funded by the Big Lottery Fund (UK).

2. BACKGROUND OF THE PROJECT

The project being evaluated started its operations in July 2015 and is expected to continue for 3.5 years up to December 2018. The Project Aim is: **Child, adolescent and women waste-pickers of Dhaka slums have the knowledge, skills, rights awareness and aspirations needed to access life changing opportunities and improve their health.**

The Expected Outcomes of the project are the following:

Outcome 1: 200 child waste-pickers (6-10 years - 60% girls and 10% children with a disability) access primary education (compliant with state government curriculum) and are integrated into mainstream schools leading to healthier lives and better life chances.

Outcome 2: 150 adolescent girl and boy waste-pickers (14-18 years) access Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET), acquiring the livelihood skills needed to obtain safe alternative employment (75% female: 25% male of whom 10% will be adolescents with a disability).

Outcome 3: 100 waste-picking mothers improve their health and access non-hazardous occupations to supplement their income, so they are able to invest in the education and health of their children.

Outcome 4: 2,500 children, women and men (including the people with disabilities) are aware of their rights to education, employment and access basic entitlements, and engaging in policy discussions that affect them.

3. PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES OF THE EVALUATION

Purpose: To assess the achievements to date of the project. The evaluation will also assess the grant’s overall performance in strengthening the organizational capacity of GUC and the effectiveness of the activities and approaches in relation to the achievement of the planned outcomes. Besides, the relationship and added value of ChildHope will be analysed.

Objectives: The objectives of this mid-term evaluation were to-

- Collect and aggregate (gender & disability) quantitative and qualitative information on the progress of achievements against each Outcome and their milestones
- Assess the effectiveness of the approaches used by GUC to bring about long lasting change
- Assess changes in organizational capacity as a result of project activities, its partnership with Nari Maitree, and identify areas of focus for further development
- Identify and document the key success factors, challenges and learning from the intervention, and make recommendations based on these findings
- Assess the quality of relationship with ChildHope and the added value they have brought to the project.

4. SCOPE AND METHODOLOGY OF THE EVALUATION

The Scope of the Evaluation, following the foregoing purpose and outcomes of the evaluation, was supposed to contain a number of elements, which have been shown the detailed terms of reference (ToR) attached with this report as Annex-I.

The approach to collection and analysis of data to conduct the evaluation was participatory, focusing on opinions of the direct beneficiaries and other related stakeholders. In this regard, records on achievements created and maintained by GUC and CH were also reviewed and analysed. In brief, the following were the different sources of information for purpose of the evaluation.



Interview by Mr. Mozammel Haque, Consultant of Mid-Term Evaluation with Thana Education Officer, DPE

- (a) Review of the available secondary sources of information, such as: ChildHope's (CH's) application to BLF for project support, annexes to CH's application to BLF, annual and half-yearly monitoring reports of GUC to CH, documents on formation of SHGs, by-laws of SHGs, written evidences on achievements in coverage of beneficiaries under social safety network, and evidences on school students connected with the mainstream schools in the country;



Focus Group Discussion with the members of the Self Help Group by Mr. Mozammel Haque, Consultant of MTE

- (b) Process of knowledgeable informants' interviews (KIIs) with staff at the offices of GUC and Nari Maitree (NM); and
- (c) Field-based data collection by way of holding one-to-one interviews and FGDs with students and teachers at the project school, trainer and training participants at the project's technical and vocational education training (TVET) centre, local education officer (Upazila Education Officer - TEO), Secretary to the local government's office (Office of Matuail Union Parishad), two mini garment factories employing a number of girls trained by GUC on sewing and tailoring, and a number of community facilitators working with the project.

5. MAJOR FINDINGS

5.1 Output-level Achievements

The output-wise achievements of the project through Year 2 was satisfactory, especially as the very project design provided for a number ground work for the project to establish in the given project location. As can be seen in the matrix below, there were relatively low or no achievements against a few activities under different outcomes. But there have been surges against certain activities in Year 2 (Table 1).



Interview with a women waste picker who received benefits from social safety net program because of advocacy initiatives by GUC-CH-BLF Project

Table 1: Male/Female/PWD Distribution of Direct Beneficiaries
Education and Health for Child Waste Pickers
Implemented by: Grambangla Unnayan Committee & Nari Maitree
Supported by: ChildHope / Big Lottery Fund

Duration Subject	July 2015-June 2016					July 2016-June 2017					Cumulative Achievement
	Total Target	Male	Female	PWD	Achieved 2016	Total Target	Male	Female	PWD	Achieved 2017	
Outcome-1											
No. of Enrolled GUC Students	200	93	85	6	178	200	104	100	11	204	
Enrolled in Mainstream School	50	3	10	0	13	125 (cumulative)	46	35	0	81	94
Outcome-2											
No. of Students Trained											
Mobile Phone Servicing	50	9	2		11	100 (cumulative)	0	0	0	0	118
Industrial Sewing		2	21	1 (M)	23		1	43	0	44	
Jute & Paper Bag Making		0	0	0	0		1	29	0	30	
Food Processing		0	0	0	0		2	8	0	10	
Total No. of Trained					34	Total	4	80	0	84	
No. of Students Placed											
Mobile Phone Servicing		5	2	0	7	100 (cumulative)	0	0	0	0	84
Industrial Sewing		2	19	1 (M)	21		1	29	0	30	
Jute & Paper Bag Making		0	0	0			0	19	0	19	
Food Processing		0	0	0			2	5	0	7	
Total No. of Placed					28	Total				56	
Outcome-3											
Member of SHGs	40	0	27	0	27	100 (cumulative)	0	85	0	85	112
Outcome-4											
Birth Registration	0	72	102	7	174	250	177	159	4	339	510
Old age allowance	0	0	0	0	0	0	14	9	0	23	23
Widow allowance	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	6	0	6	6
Allowance for PWDs	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	2	-	4	4
VGD	0	0	0	0	0	0		16	0	16	16

As evident in the foregoing table, though there had been low achievement against mainstreaming of students in Year 1, it went significantly high in the following year. Besides, there was no achievement against Training on Jute and Paper Bags and Food Processing against Outcome 2 in Year 1. Similarly, no achievement could be made against Mobile Phone Repairing Service in Year 2 (though a batch of 10 was accomplished in Year 1). But out of 30 trainees of Jute & paper bag making, 19 have already been placed and out of 10 trainees of Food processing, 7 have been placed. Besides, the achievements against Outcome 3 (SHGs) is moderately high, even if not fully made. Achievements against Outcome 4 (Advocacy and lobbying) have been satisfactory. Though Year 1 was dedicated mostly to establishing and strengthening GUC's PR System in the project area, there were significant achievements against Birth Registration (50% of the cumulative target for Year 1 and 2). In addition, work on initial PR led to satisfactory achievements against four types of Social Safety Provisions (Annex-V).

5.2 Effectiveness of the Approaches Followed

Outcome 1:

5.2.1 The school and its students have been generously well-accepted by the neighbouring mainstream schools and the local community. Emergence of various local sponsors to assist project implementation in multiple ways is a clear indication of the fact.

5.2.2 In discussions with the local education office and mainstream primary schools, it was asked as to how the students from socio-economically well-off families at the mainstream schools interacted and behaved with the students that came from GUC School. In response, it was learnt that there was apparently no aspersion to the ex-students of the GUC School and interactions between the two groups of students took place freely. Furthermore, in order to measure the level of non-discrimination to the ex-students of GUC School, it was asked if the respondents would term the attitude of the students from better-off families to those from GUC as 'Welcoming', 'Accepting Friendly Invitation', 'Neutral', 'Avoiding' or 'Reactive'. It was revealed that the attitude was positive above average and, in most cases, 'Accepting Friendly Invitation' and 'Welcoming'. The local TEO, additionally, reported that her efforts are always on toward ensuring a peaceful environment in the schools in her jurisdiction, so the mainstreamed students who came from GUC and other non-formal schools could continue their studies peacefully and without hesitation.

5.2.3 Education Component of the project appears to have influenced the following changes at the project locality, which should cause more long-term positive impact in this neighbourhood:

- Education of the children at the schools are influencing their own lifestyle changes
- The educated children are influencing the positive changes in the lifestyles of their mothers and other family members at home



Govt. provided text book distribution among the students of Grambangla School under GUC-CH-BLF Project

- Attending classes at schools promoted a heightened positive image about the children's self-image
- While visiting the classes and talking to the students and the teachers at the GUC School, it was clear to the consultant that there was marked positive change in the personal cleanliness practiced by the students as compared to the other neighbouring children outside this school.

5.2.4 In discussions with the Project's Volunteers, it emerged that they nowadays feel encouraged to send their children to the schools (including the one operated by GUC) because the education there is free. They also added that had free education been within their reach from the distant past, they would have, by this time, been able to shift from waste-picking to the other more decent jobs.

Outcome 2:

5.2.5 The TVET Centre at the project site at Matuail, Dhaka, is vibrant now only because of the Tailoring Section where large number of children are undergoing training. Around 70% of these trainees are adolescent girls. The other four sections, such as Food Processing, Jute and Paper Bags, Cell Phone Repairing are all closed due to a number of reasons; but a Beauty Parlour trade was never started. Despite this fact, there have been reports of successes achieved by the Tailoring Section that are significant in number. As for example, one of the male trainees of this training centre, after having received training on tailoring, found a tailoring job in a company at Dubai, UAE.

Besides, there were two other local success stories around the project's TVET Centre. In one case, a girl trained by the tailoring training centre got profitably engaged into buying old clothes and then remaking and selling them. In another case, a boy trained by the centre initiated his own tailoring business. In both the cases, the child entrepreneurs get paid on a piece-rate basis. This arrangement of payment basis indicates that the children trained by the Tailoring Centre improved their skills and are now empowered enough to realize fair price for their services.



Discussion by Mr. Mozammel Haque, Consultant of MTE with the employers (local garment factory owners) of trained adolescent waste pickers by GUC-CH-BLF project



Focus Group Discussion with the Volunteers of the GUC-CH-BLF project facilitated by Mr. Mozammel Hoque, Consultant of MTE

Outcome 3:

5.2.6 To the members of the SHGs, one of the most preferred achievements so far has been their newly acquired ability to open and operate their own (SHGs') bank accounts. At the initial stage, the elected representatives and other members of the SHGs faltered a bit even in accompanying the GUC officials to the banks to introduce themselves in the process of opening their respective bank accounts. In course of progressive nurturing and mentoring by the project officials, it is now observed that the members of the SHGs are largely able to self-operate their bank accounts and to interact with the bank officials freely in this regard.

5.2.7 The SHG members, besides accessing technical inputs by the project management for their socio-economic development, have by now also got engaged into local-level advocacy for realization of their various socio-economic needs through accessing the available social safety network.

5.2.8 One of the seven SHGs formed so far, the Surjamukhee SHG have mobilised a total savings of BDT 30,600 based on monthly savings of BDT 200/member.

5.2.9 Resources gained other than internal resource mobilization by the SHGs are:

- Obtaining Birth Certificates; and
- EPI (Immunisation programmes), held monthly.

Advocacy is going on in order to facilitate the issuance of national ID cards (NID) to the members of the target families. Till now, the Government has disagreed from issuance of NIDs on the point that these citizens do not have any proof residence. GUC, along with the SHGs and the local government administration, has been advocating for issuance of the NIDs to the project target families. The local officials of the Department of Education is also reported to have extended their hands toward pressuring the Government to issue the NIDs. They are planning to advise the local government on how they should send a letter to the Bangladesh Election Commission for issuance of the NID Cards.

5.2.10 In order to making the SHGs self-managed and managerially sustainable, they have been provided various technical inputs besides their internal resource-mobilisation. Among the technical inputs received by them, the following trainings deserve mentioning, such as:

- Healthy cooking
- Assessing eligibility for SHG loans
- Responsibilities of the Secretary and the cashier
- Nutrition
- Childcare
- SHG Accounting.

The results, so far apparent, of the inputs received by the SHGs are:

- Group savings
- Understanding provisions in the SHG By-laws
- Learning/education
- Bank account operation independently
- Creative thoughts on feasible enterprises with support of SHG loans.

At present, the SHG accounts are maintained basically with two signatories, one from the SHG and another one from GUC. GUC has the plan to shift the entire responsibility of signatory to the SHGs on further attainment of maturity by these groups. It was also clear during the consultant's discussions with around 25 SHG members that they had clear impression about the markets in their locality and had creatively thought of feasible enterprises that they could operate profitably. On enquiry, it was understood that a number of the loan applicants to the SHGs had fixed their plans on specific types of business to conduct with loans from their SHGs.

5.2.11 The SHG members are aware of the need for clarity in assessing a member's eligibility for loan whenever an application for loan is submitted. They said that the following are the eligibility criteria for receiving loans-

- Purpose-backed loan applications;
- Productive business proposal; and
- Applicant's credit-worthiness.

7) The SHG members are also aware of the need to ensure proper distribution of benefits from SHG in a family. In some cases, it was reported that a member of an SHG would borrow loan for initiating businesses to be operated jointly by her and her husband. They were apparently aware that their SHG loans would be used for benefits to be drawn by every member of their families, rather than benefiting the husband or one or a few members of their families.

5.2.12 The intra-project advocacy on the merits and demerits of waste-picking carried out mainly through the Project Volunteers showed positive results. In a meeting with around 15 of such Volunteers, attended by the consultant, showed that the following awareness-raising had been accomplished-

- In terms of a combination of financial pay-off and social cost (like accidents and other adverse effects on health), the engagement into waste-picking had a significantly lower pay-off, as compared to other apparently low-income trades;
- The high probability of casualties from waste-picking in the project dump site was most likelihood of causing permanent partial or full disability;
- However profitable waste-picking is, it does not provide much scope for expansion of revenue in future; and
- Besides all its merits and demerits, waste-picking is looked down by majority of the population in the locality as well as across the country.

The Volunteers' awareness about the need for a decent livelihood enabled them to act as the 'change agents' in the project, motivating the parents and their children to go for education and TVET for moving toward a decent livelihood (the Volunteers mentioned a number of casualties that happened with a number of children as well as their parents in the project locality. It appeared that these past unwelcome incidents helped the project children and their parents to try to get rid of the occupation of waste-picking).

5.2.13 The involvement of the mothers in the SHGs has apparently improved their dynamism in efforts to look for better occupations. Majority of them said that they would like to (a) establish a profitable shop, and (b) buy a plot of land for their less costly residence. This proves that majority of the mothers have improved their economic status by attaching themselves to the SHGs, but they are still at the threshold of breaking their economic status from the below-subsistence level. Additionally, their gender-awareness got revealed when they mentioned that a boy may do well with little education because he can move more freely in the society than a girl, but a girl needs more of education because with a bit of education, she can fetch a good job in a garment factory at relatively higher salary scales. Moreover, they said that access to money (funds) are making them more intelligent and creative, enabling them to move into new profitable venues of business.

5.3 Factors behind the Key Successes

Outcome 1:

5.3.1 The waste-pickers' families at Matuail (in Dhaka city) is an integrated society allowing development interventions in many sectors (education, health etc.) among them as a realistic approach. They are economically of the poorest class, a homogenous community in this sense. Majority, if not all, of them are migrants from a few districts in the southern administrative division of Barisal. They migrated to Dhaka city in the face of loss of households and properties due to severe river erosion. As such, most of them do not have permanent residence at Matuail. Majority of them are also engaged into a limited number of more or less similar occupations. In this context, integrity among the community is also apparently strong.

5.3.2 The local community at the project has been holding a high opinion about the potential effectiveness of this project. As a result, a number of local sponsors have come up with numerous support for smooth implementation of the project. Though relatively small in terms of monetary value of these resources, it additionally symbolizes moral and technical support to the project, which should be increasingly effective in the future course of the project's implementation. As for instance, a local philanthropist was proactively supporting the project in various forms, one among which was donation of notebooks to the GUC School. The consultant also had a meeting with one of the other significant sponsors to the project along with a number of peer members of his local clout. It appeared that this sponsor is also looking forward to extend further support to the project in future.

5.3.3 As the local Thana Education Officer (TEO) put it, the Bangladesh Government is now pursuing a policy of generous subsidies to the students at the lower levels (Primary and Junior Levels). As such, it has been possible to absorb students from outside the mainstream schools into the mainstream schools and also to increase their continued education, avoiding early dropouts. As this local education officer

mentioned, the Government also attaches high priority to mainstreaming students from non-formal education schools. Therefore, it is likely that GUC will have greater opportunity to mainstream their students in future. It has been the result of both (a) GUC's positive, relevant PR at the local level, and (b) the Government's policy to assist students in the poorer socio-economic strata.

5.3.4 The development support being provided by the Government to the primary school students in the form of food subsidy and provision of healthcare appear to act as a full incentive for the poor parents to send their children to schools. This also promoted the motivation of parents of the students at the GUC School to send their children to the mainstream schools and let them continue their education there.

5.3.5 As per the project design, GUC obtained training for their teachers with support of CAMPE (Campaign for Popular Education), an NGO supported largely by donors working at both policy and operations levels. These trainings equipped the teachers on techniques of teaching to the non-formal students.

5.3.6 In order to motivate the students at the GUC School, they were sent on visits to other local mainstream schools. In this regard, the rapport built by GUC with the school managing committees and teachers of the visited schools facilitated the students' visits.

5.3.7 The Parents' Welfare Group Meetings were also found to be effective in motivating the mothers of the project children to understand the following:

- Importance of children's education;
- Mothers' responsibilities in ensuring the children's regular attendance in the GUC School; and
- Ways to monitor attendance of the children at the GUC School;
- Status of the children's presence at the classes in the GUC School.

5.3.8 Both of the local education office and a particular local primary school (Matuail Paschimpara Government Primary School) were supportive of GUC's education activities. The head teacher and the local TEO together authenticated an application of GUC for obtaining books from the Government's Education Department. As a standing rule, any application for the Government's free books has to be authenticated by a head teacher of a primary school of the applicant school's catchment area, besides the default authentication by the local TEO. This positive gesture from the two education officials was the result of relevant PR by GUC at the local level.

5.3.9 GUC's enhanced PR at the field level was indicated on another occasion by the visit of the local DD (Deputy Director) of Education to the visit to the GUC School. In fact, the day of this visit was 27 December 2016 when a consultative meeting was held at Matuail on "Education Governance and Decentralisation" over there led by the local Education Office. While the meeting was attended by a total number of 107 participants, the DD (Education), on conclusion of the meeting, paid a visit to the GUC School in order to orient himself more about the educational activities of GUC.

5.3.10 As the local TEO mentioned the Teacher : Student Ratio at GUC School is also favourable, which is 9 : 204 = 1 : 22.67. In contrast, the Teacher : Student Ratio in most of the English-medium schools and NGO schools is far above this ratio. As such, attention given to the students at the GUC School is

relatively more intensive. Six of the teachers at GUC are funded by Big Lottery Fund, while the rest are supported by other projects.

Outcome 2:

5.3.10 Besides various local reasons that assisted in making the project a success, global and national factors also acted positively for the project. As a result of increased impetus given by the global buyers' community and the Bangladesh Government on compliance to ethical rules, some of the firms manufacturing export-oriented garments lost their major shares in the export-oriented RMG market. As the orders for export-oriented RMG are now going to be placed with the relatively more stable and compliant RMG units, many of the smaller units have either perished or scaled down their businesses depending on sub-contracting orders from the larger RMG units or entering the local RMG market. Consequently, there has been a rise in the number of smaller RMG firms at various regions of the country. Similar has been the situation at Matuail, Dhaka city.

There has been an increasing number of smaller, local market-oriented RMG firms at Matuail, where the children (mostly girls) trained by the Tailoring Section of GUC's Project Office get easily employed.

It was also reported that (i) the children trained by GUC's training centre are more literate than the average RMG worker across the country, and (ii) they are more skilled than the average RMG worker of the country. These facts were revealed by the owner of two local RMG factories. The other reason for special attraction of girls toward tailoring, as compared with those for other trades, is that women and girls in Bangladesh still find tailoring profession to be the easiest and one of the socially safest trades.

5.4 GUC's Organisational Capacity

5.4.1 Staffing: No position in the project was reported to lie vacant when different incumbents were scheduled to be recruited at different times. The project has staff working in all the available 26 positions. The coordination between GUC and CH is accomplished by CH's Partnerships and Project Manager in Bangladesh. The project in Bangladesh is supervised at the top level by the Programme Manager. The Project Manager is also the Executive Director of GUC.

Out of the total 26 project staff, 12 are female and the remaining 14 male, an almost fully balanced arithmetic proportion. Relevance of specific functions have been considered for proper gender-specification of different posts in this project.

It appears that recruitments of staff in different positions were sequenced at par with the needs for different incumbents, as the project's implementation phases demanded. The academic levels and work experiences of the project staff, in general, meet the project's needs.

5.4.2 Organisation Structure: GUC has clear-cut divisions among its staff for implementation of the BLF-supported project and to look after other projects of GUC. While the focal person of Nari Maitree in this project directly supervises the Vocational Training and Placement Officer, the bulk of responsibilities at the top level is carried out by the Project Manager who comes from GUC.

Besides maintaining coordination with Nari Maitree's focal person, the Project Manager directly supervises a total of seven project staff in five different positions, such as-

- Monitoring and Learning Officer
- Advocacy and Networking Manager, who supervises the Advocacy and Networking Officer
- Field Officers (3), overseeing the Caretakers and Teachers
- Accountant
- Administration Officer.

Reporting lines from the top (Project Manager's level) to the bottom (those of Volunteers, caretakers, Teachers and Vocational Trainers) are also clearly defined, in conjunction with comprehensive job descriptions.

5.4.3 Operating Systems: GUC has been following its predesigned operating systems with provisions for flexibilities, as needed from time to time. Currently, it has the following operating rules/manuals-

- Organisational Manual-2006
- Service Rules-2006
- Finance Manual-2006.

All the three operating manuals/rules are comprehensive and covers all complexities and challenges to be managed by GUC.

The organizational manual includes such issues as Administration, Public relations, financial Audit, Security, and Suggested Communication System.

The comprehensive Finance Manual covers issues like Sources of Funds, maintenance of Funds, Rules Pertaining to Bank Account Operation, Approval of expenses, Documentation of Financial Transactions, and Financial Audit.

GUC's Service Rules-2006, in fact, forms GUC's human resources manual, which is also pragmatic and need-based.

5.4.4 Representation to Outside Entities: Under the Project "Education and Health for Child Waste Pickers" the "Network of Waste Pickers in Bangladesh" consisting of 41 member organizations has been established. Besides the network members, GUC maintains regular communication with different ministries, Dhaka City Corporation, National Human Rights Commission, local Union Parishad, donor agencies, journalists and other stakeholders.

To maintain communication and represent Grambangla and the waste pickers' issue, GUC organizes networking meetings, seminars, consultation meetings, media campaign etc. As the communication materials Grambangla uses organizational and project brochure, policy briefs, short power point presentation and video documentary on waste pickers.

Moreover, GUC maintains regular e-mail and telephone communications with the stakeholders.

5.5 Inter-partner Relationship Patterns

Partnership pattern in the project, as expected faced teething problems at the initial stage of the project implementation. Following that, two partners (GUC and Nari Maitree) shared the overall

implementation of the project. While GUC was the lead NGO as well as responsible for implementation of Outcomes 1, 3 and 4, Nari Maitree was given the responsibility of implementing Outcome 2 due to their decades-old experience and expertise in this trait.

Besides, Childhope (UK) gave all-out support to the two partners from the UK as well as through visits to the project offices and the project site at least once in six months. ChildHope (UK)'s support to the project has been instrumental in that it led to necessary organizational strengthening of the implementing partner NGOs as well as ensuring compliance of project implementation and monitoring with the predetermined principles mentioned in the project proposal.

5.6 Challenges Faced and Lessons Learnt

Outcome 1:

5.6.1 There are currently a very few disabled students in the GUC School, which is far below the targeted 10% of the total project children. Discussions with various project revealed that the currently prevalent definition and/or classification of disability restricts the number of total enrolment of disabled children. It is difficult to maintain this given target on two grounds, that is-

- a) Finding out the required number of disabled children; and
- b) Making the identified registered disabled children included in the school or TVET courses through support available at the project's disposal at par with the project implementation approach.

5.6.2 The distance between the target children's households and the location of the GUC School is problematic for a significant number of the school children. They find it difficult to travel the given distances due to the long distances they have to cover especially due to inundation of the surrounding roads under floodwater.

5.6.3 It has been observed that the need for some girl students to work at home assisting their parents in various household chores is strong and it does cause a barrier to these girls' attendance at schools. Despite this, achievement has been made by the project toward motivating the parents and their children to attend classes at GUC School and other mainstream schools. It was also reported that as the mothers of these families are bound to remain occupied for significantly long periods daily in order to fend for the family members, dependence on the older female children for carrying out household chores is a norm in among project beneficiaries. Various local stakeholders, like the local TEO and head teachers of mainstream schools believe that both economic empowerment of the target waste-picker families and education of their children should go hand-in-hand for sustainable development of the target population.

5.6.4 The Government of Bangladesh, as per its ongoing rules, does not usually provide stipends to students of schools outside the purview of the government-owned primary schools. Though a number of other support services are available to the privately owned primary schools, efforts made by GUC based

on its local level lobbying and advocacy was not effective enough to obtain the support of the Government to provide stipend to GUC's school.

Outcome 2:

5.6.5 As mentioned earlier, Nari Maitree found it difficult to optimally involve the target children into four trades besides tailoring. Though female adolescents find it difficult to engage themselves into other trades for social reasons, as a matter of fact, the issues related to demand, supply, quality of goods into demand, capital requirements, difficulties in marketing etc. were apparently not considered enough and correctly. With sufficient knowledge on these issues and the possibility of efficacious training to different types of adolescent boys and girls could have made it possible to propose properly considered and feasible trades.

5.6.6 Besides the issue of easily understandable training and easy employment of trainees trained in tailoring into garment factories, certain market changes peculiar to the Matuail area has also apparently influenced tailoring to be a popular trade among GUC's TVET participants. There are, at present, a number of sub-contracted firms dedicated to shoe-sewing. They got sub-contracted by the Bata Shoe Company (Bangladesh) Ltd., among others. Consequently, there has been a huge surge in the demand for sewing/tailoring services at Matuail area.

5.6.7 As far as cell phone repairing service is considered, focusing on training on this trade was also difficult for Nari Maitree for different reasons. Nari Maitree wanted to make a breakthrough by breaking the monopoly of boys in this trade (of Cell Phone repairing Service). But, as partial analysis was only made apparently during the project design phase, the likely difficulty to be faced by the target girls in assimilating the technical aspects of related training was not envisioned. As a result, only one batch of training on this trade for ten girls could be conducted. The number of placed student of mobile phone servicing is 7. Two factors may have contributed to this failure, that is-

- Relatively low level of literacy and numeracy of the trainee girls; and
- The project's inability to conduct efficient training by way of simplifying complex issues of training.

5.6.8 Major demand for street food exists mostly in the street restaurants of the project locality. Prior to initiating training on this trade, Nari Maitree carried out a demand-supply assessment by way of convening a meeting covering most of the prospective buyers of the product (food) of this trade. Subsequently, one batch of training has been completed. On completion of that training, initiation of food preparation by NM and its marketing did give rise to demand for the given types of food in the project area. Accordingly, some foods were also sold by Nari Maitree. As an outcome of the training, some of the trainees started their own business in Food Preparation especially in collaboration with their mothers at home or near their homes.

5.6.9 Though Nari Maitree launched training on the trade of Jute Bags and Paper Bags as per design of the project, it has now been learnt that a large number of factories producing these products was existing in the project area since before the design of the project. This trade is a capital-intensive one

requiring huge initial capital. As a result of the training, all the children trained got employed in various packaging factories at the local level.

Outcome 3:

5.6.10 SHGs and Withdrawal from Waste-picking-

Withdrawal of waste-picking mothers from their present occupation (waste-picking) for making a living on sale of scraps is a strong challenge. There are many issues attached to it, such as:

- Need for survival at a below-subsistence level
- Need for a number of sustainable development inputs, such education for children, awareness on health and lessons on primary healthcare, knowledge on sources of resources for economic wellbeing
- Social awareness about need for women's awareness and girls' education.

Besides, it was learnt that income from sale of scraps, which are obtained relatively easily and without making any financial payment, is a high-income business as compared to other occupations viable for them (Currently, the prices of their hoarded scrap materials have decreased, and they, as a result, are now holding their stocks in order sell them later when the prices become acceptably higher). In these circumstances, it is difficult to really motivating them to withdraw quickly from waste-picking in absence of substantively higher income from other occupations. Hence, the persisting delay in their withdrawal from waste-picking.

From the above-noted challenge in fully motivating the project mothers from waste-picking, the role of SHGs is crucial, and a well-paced and graduated shifting of the SHGs to a more vibrant and profitable entities ensuring strong participation of all members in a well-governed democratic way.

5.6.11 The members of the SHGs are, in majority cases, illiterate and extremely poor. While they are mostly engaged into hard labour for long hours to make a living, they, at the formative phase of the SHGs, had little motivation and ability to attend SHGs' operations. Currently, especially seeing promise of ways to economic emancipation through SHGs' support, they are more willing than before to partake SHGs' operations. In spite of this growing motivation among the SHG members, it is to be noted that low literacy and scope to spare time to spare to attend SHGs' operations in future may act as a constraint in managing the SHGs properly.

5.6.12 As also in case of Outcome 2, the trainings for SHG operations and promise of a better future through the SHG members' self-help acted as a strong incentive for getting the children enrolled in TVET courses, especially on tailoring. The target mothers expressed their satisfaction on this because they could feel that getting employed or initiating own business through having learnt the art of tailoring provided a great scope for especially the girls to move toward economic emancipation. In a society where there is still some taboo lurking on way to allowing women to engage into independent professional work, the target mothers found tailoring to be a sort of compromise between the target children's urgent need for economic activities and partially maintaining the existing tabooed system. As

such, the adoption of other economic activities based on TVET trainings provided (such as Cell Phone Repairing, Beauty Parlour, Food Processing, and Jute and Paper Bags) did not pick up well. Besides, there are other reasons for which the trainings on other trades did not pick up significantly. Therefore, it is to be expected that until there is promise for future economic benefits, the project participants are not to be expected to be vibrant in their management of their groups and their project activities. In this sense, facilitation of the project participants' access to the Government's social safety provisions is significantly useful.

6. Recommendations

- ix) Interactions with the mothers should be enhanced
- x) Case studies on successful child waste-pickers should be cited to all the waste-pickers for their motivation to positively change their lives
- xi) Grading of positively changed families should be done for better motivation of the community of waste-pickers
- xii) Reception should be accorded to those students who have been mainstreamed
- xiii) Some of the suitable child waste-pickers should be absorbed in the project as Volunteers
- xiv) The parents should be brought into more interactive processes, so they accept the positive advice of their children
- xv) Revisit should be made to the design and feasibility of the trainings on various trades, as designed at the initial phase of the project
- xvi) More emphasis should be attached to (a) growth of further leadership (democratic) and (b) growth of second line of leadership in the SHGs.