

**WELL COME TO THE PRESENTATION FOR
KNOWLEDGE FORUM**

**EXPERIENCES OF WORKING WITH
CHILDREN LIVING AND WORKING ON THE
STREET OF METROPOLITAN CITIES IN
BANGLADESH**



WHO ARE THE CHILDREN IN THE STREET

- Children living and working in the street (CIS) are those engaged in some kind of economic activity ranging from begging to vending
- Who live with families most go home at the end of the day and contribute their earnings to their family
- May be attending school and retain a sense of belonging to a family
- Those who do not live with family or homeless actually live and work on the street.
- Family ties of some of them may exist but are tenuous and are maintained only casually or occasionally.

THE CONTEXT

- The latest estimates put the numbers of these children as high as 100 million in world (UNICEF, 2002: 37).
- South Asia is a region of 7 developing and poor nations with high density of population, frequent natural disasters and rapid urbanization and industrialization
- The huge numbers of rural population migrate to the major cities for employments and starts living in slums and on the open air on the streets.
- Homelessness, familial disharmony, abuse, neglects and torture give rises to the street children phenomenon in the major cities in this region like Delhi, Mumbai, Chennai, Kolkata, Dhaka, Karachi, and Lahore.
- SCs in India is 11 million and in Delhi it is 400,000 and other major concentration in Chennai, Mumbai and Kolkata. In Pakistan the number seems to be 1.5 million.

BANGLADESH SITUATION

- in Bangladesh it is six to seven hundred thousand with major concentration in Dhaka, Naraynganj Chittagong, Khulna, Sylhet, and Barisal cities.
- In the late 2004 the “Appropriate Resources for Improvement of Street Children Environment” ARISE project of UNDP identified that the total number of street children in Bangladesh was 679,728.
- They estimated and projected that there will be increase in 1,144,754 in 2014 and 1, 615,330 by 2024.

Why do children come, live and work on the street?:

- unemployment or underemployment of parents,
- familial neglect, abuse, torture
- supplement family income.
- divorce of parents, unloving step mother or father,
- sexual abuse, death of parents, illness of parents and lack of food,
- family conflict, violence and unrest situation in the family and
- sometimes the city life attract some children

What happened in their daily life in street situation?

- grow in a state of neglect and deprivation,
- no protection, education, affection, care and guidance.
- street children live, work and struggle for survival in an environment of unhygienic, un-conductive and undesirable situation by any living standard.
- once a child come and started living and working on the street has a strong possibility that ends up sexually abused and exploited.
- do not have access to basic services required for their healthy growth and development,
- nor can they be able to participate in the national development efforts
- CIS are forced to do anything which keeps them alive, even used by political programs exposed to dangers like bomb explosion, violent attack etc.
- Lack of secure employment push or pull them in to illegal work like drug trafficking, smuggling and stealing,

Needs of the Children in Street

- ***Strategic Needs:***
- Joyful and entertaining environment to play, chat and participate recreational events
- Creating an enabling environment within the family, community and other places as possible
- Development of a caring and supportive attitude and behavior towards the CIS and their needs
- Protection and restraining from illegal act or harmful work engagement

Needs of the Children in Street

- **Survival Needs:** Food and nutrition, Safe shelter, Education, Cloths, Treatment, Safe water and sanitation access
- **Family Ties and Social Needs:** Good Parental relations, Good family environment (parents/kin/relatives), Love and affection, Positive attitude to children, Social security, No physical punishment (domestic, street and workplace), and Mental support
- **Workplace needs:** Non hazardous work engagement, Safe and secure work place, Employment security, Good behavior from the employer, and Employable skills

Challenges

- diversity of the street children
- difficult to respond to the need for counseling
- non regular attendance often because their lives were irregular and with many obstacles.
- safety and security especially for the girls is a big challenge
- great vulnerability to accident, injury and attack.
- peer pressure on adolescent street children to enter anti-social or criminal activities.
- no clear policy direction at the national level related to Street Children
- no social acceptance of work with street children – it is difficult to find premises to rent, even for projects.

DAM Ongoing Interventions and Examples of Response to Their Needs

- shelter and creating a safe living environment for children
- improved health service – the link to urban primary health service and the link to services by healthcare organizations/projects.
- skills development and job placement.
- link to mainstream school opportunities for children
- participation in decision making and to have a voice in expressing their own circumstances and feelings.
- Counseling
- Case documents and tracking

STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

- ***Vision:*** Urban societies in Bangladesh in which children are enabled to achieve their full adult potential by growing in a secure, stable and loving environment that ensures adequate nutrition, good health, physical and emotional security, and the opportunity to develop physically, intellectually, emotionally and socially.
- ***Mission:*** To protect children living and working in street in particularly the Divisional cities against all forms of abuse and neglect through accessible, integrated and coordinated services.

Strategic Objectives:

- Explore issues and problems and develop need based short term and long term projects and interventions for sustainable development of the CiS.
- Ensure that family, community, state, employers and other duty bearers consider the needs and priorities of the CiS
- Create an enabling environment such as access to services, institutional and community capacity building and policy advocacy for the CiS to survive, grow, develop for CiS better and improved future life.
- Piloting model interventions for scale up and replication within and outside agencies and mainstreaming in DAM as a cross cutting issue to address the needs of CiS by the sectoral interventions.

Expected changes

- **Immediate:** children will immediately be resorted and provided with safe shelter, food, recreation, counseling, awareness and life skills education along with reintegration with their families which would give them more confidence and eagerness to act. Better mental and physical health will energize them to take part in educational, vocational training and income generating activities.

Mid-term Changes

- There will be attitudinal change of the families, employer, law enforcers and the community with an access to education, food and fulfillment of other basic human needs. Children will also be safe from any type of abuse and be trained on technical and vocational skills which would enable them to get hazard free employment alongside continuing their education.

Long-term changes:

- All CiS will
- grow up in a facilitating and friendly environment with nutritious food, better education, mental and physical safety.
- Networks by government, non government organizations, donor community, law enforcing agencies and civil society
- The community and all stakeholders will be more aware of the rights and needs of CiS and
- eventually they will be mainstreamed in the society.
- Through sensitization, awareness and advocacy work specie state policies will be drawn up for compliance to child policy,
- CRC and other national and international commitments so that in the long run the number of CiS is reduced.

RIGHT BASED APPROACH

- DAM will follow CRC values as its guiding principles which influence the way each child's right is fulfilled, and serve as a constant reference for the implementation and monitoring of all efforts to fulfill and protect children's rights.
- Best interest of the Child
- Non discrimination
- Right to survival, wellbeing and development
- Respect of the view of the child

KEY STRATEGIES

- Prevention
- Protection
- Participation and Development
- Reintegration

DAM INTERVENTIONS/ PROGRAMMES

- **Drop in Centre (DIC)**
- **Outreach Program at Family and Community Level**
- **Partnership and Linkages**
- **Children City**

MAJOR ACTIVITIES

- *Participative Situational Analysis and Progress Monitoring:*
- *Improve Socio-medical Support*
- *Schooling, Life-Skill Education and Vocational Training*
- *Training of Community, Association and other Institutional Actors*
- *Advocacy, Campaign and Networking*
- *Standardization of Working Methods and Institutional Capacities*

THANK YOU VERY MUCH

