REPORT ON CSR IN BANGLADESH
2014

SUSTAINABILITY FOR A BETTER FUTURE
Report on CSR in Bangladesh - 2014

Sustainability for a Better Future

CSR Centre
House 11, Road 14, Gulshan 1, Dhaka 1212
www.csrcentre-bd.org

May 2014
Report on CSR in Bangladesh 2014
Sustainability for a Better Future

Published: 2014

Published by:
CSR Centre

Apartment 1A, House 11, Road 14,
Gulshan 1, Dhaka-1212, Bangladesh

Tel: (+88) 02 989 3723
Fax: (+88) 02 989 2186
Email: ceo@csrcentre-bd.org

Photographs: Collected from the internet and respective organizations
Design and Layout: Musarrat Hossain
Content Coordination: Musarrat Hossain
Support Team: Farhana Sharmin and Saiham Ibne Rafi
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Disclaimer

This document has been prepared in good faith on the basis of information available at the date of publication without any independent verification and reflects the understanding of the CSR Centre. Information about companies was secured through consultative process, web research and secondary literature review. For more information about particular CSR initiatives please contact the company directly.

CSR Centre 2014
Acknowledgements

We are delighted to share with you the CSR Centre’s “Report on CSR in Bangladesh 2014: Sustainability for a Better Future”. On behalf of the Centre I take this opportunity to thank all of our development partners, companies, government stakeholders, UN Global Compact members and of course our CSR Centre Board of Trustees for their keen interest in taking the CSR agenda forward in Bangladesh. Our project partners deserve special thanks for realizing the importance of private sector engagement in promoting the United Nations Guiding Principles specifically those related to labour standards and human rights.

I would like to thank those companies who have shared their vision of CSR through specific sector or issue based case studies in order to let others know how to engage and implement CSR best practices. They have revealed that these CSR approaches are linked to long term vision of their companies and its core business strategies in sectors such as textile and RMG, ICT and telecommunications, financial, health care and agriculture sector.

The team spirit and guidance of Ms. Musarrat Hossain, Research Officer of the Centre in preparing this publication has been instrumental in bringing out an informative CSR document for Bangladesh which will inform both national and global stakeholders how Bangladesh is attempting to implement CSR at a national level across sectors.

Sustainability is becoming a "buzz word" in today’s world as resources are limited, communities are more informed through electronic media and ICT and partnerships tend to strengthen social impact, multi-stakeholder involvements through private sector mobilization can lead to sustainable development and to a better future for the generations ahead.

Shahamin S. Zaman
CEO, CSR Centre
Foreword

I am pleased to present the ‘Report on CSR in Bangladesh 2014’ by CSR Centre. This would be for the second time that the CSR Centre is producing a comprehensive report covering CSR practices in the private Sector. This report provides a summary of the array of activities carried out by member organizations of the CSR Centre in 2013. It also gives us an overview of the governance of the centre, its present operations and the roles that related projects have played.

The world is facing significant environmental and sustainability related challenges. Global trends such as climate change, resource management, increasing demand for energy, labor rights are real issues that are forcing society as a whole to think and act differently. The situation is no different for Bangladesh. Corporate Social Responsibility in private corporate sector though not new to Bangladesh now, is still at its nascent stage. As the private sector here grows and its geographic footprints expand, it needs to consistently evolve what it does. Achieving Millennium Development Goals will be next to impossible without a vibrant and innovative private sector that believes in creating and nurturing shared value – that spans across both business and society. That is why we are pushing ourselves to find new ways to lessen the negative impact of our operations, as well as bridge the gap between ‘the corporate world’ and ‘the labour force’.

Since its inception in 2007, The CSR Centre has been spearheading CSR agenda in the private sector at both national and international levels. The Centre plays a crucial role in developing National Level Guidelines for CSR engagement in the private sector – the need for which was deeply felt by leading business associations for a long time.

The report provides noteworthy examples drawn from representatives from all major areas, including RMG, telecom, agricultural, financial, education and healthcare sectors. The heart of this report is the series of case studies highlighting organizational processes that illustrate how big players are now enacting CSR in their daily operations. The study also looks into the efficacy of NGO - private sector alliances.

I look forward to this report proving beneficial not only to private organizations operating in all segments of the economy, but also to researchers, development activists and general readers alike, who are keen to learn from each other’s examples. I hope that this report will help to instill valuable insight to the stakeholders from any organization willing to develop their CSR activities.

Finally, I would like to express heartfelt thanks to the members of CSR Centre for their initiative in preparing this report.

Anis A. Khan
Managing Director & CEO
Mutual Trust Bank Limited &
Treasurer Trustee - CSR Centre
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<td>Corporate Social Responsibility</td>
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<td>UNGC</td>
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<td>UNGCLN</td>
<td>United Nations Global Compact Local Network</td>
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<td>EC</td>
<td>European Commission</td>
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<td>DBP</td>
<td>Danida Business Partnerships</td>
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<td>ICT</td>
<td>Information Communication Technology</td>
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<td>IT</td>
<td>Information Technology</td>
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<td>RMG</td>
<td>Ready-Made Garments</td>
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<td>CRBP</td>
<td>Child Rights and Business Principle</td>
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<td>MNC</td>
<td>Multi-National Companies</td>
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<td>FDI</td>
<td>Foreign Direct Investment</td>
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<td>SME</td>
<td>Small and Medium enterprise</td>
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<td>TBL</td>
<td>Triple Bottom Line</td>
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<tr>
<td>OECD</td>
<td>Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development</td>
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<td>ISO</td>
<td>International Organization for Standardization</td>
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<td>COP</td>
<td>Communication on Progress Report</td>
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<td>ILO</td>
<td>International Labour Organization</td>
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<td>Millennium Development Goal</td>
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<td>IPCC</td>
<td>Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change</td>
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<td>Carbon Performance Improvement Initiative</td>
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<td>Green House Gas</td>
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Introducing Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) is viewed as a comprehensive set of policies, practices and programs that are integrated into business operations, supply chains, and decision-making processes throughout the organization. Wherever the organization does business, it includes responsibility for current and past actions as well as future impacts. CSR involves addressing the legal, ethical, commercial and other expectations society has from business and making decisions that fairly balance the claims of all key stakeholders.

Corporate social responsibility (CSR) could be defined as an obligation, beyond that required by the law and economics, for a firm to pursue long term goals that are good for society. It is about how a company manages its business process to produce an overall positive impact on the society. There is however no agreed definitions of CSR, as not all necessarily agree with each other about what is socially responsible. Thus the number of different definitions is infinite.

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) describes the general responsibility of a company for sustainable management in an economical, ecological and social respect. The multitude of companies and markets results in different interpretations of the term.

European Commission (EC) defines CSR as: "Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) is a fundamental concept designed to help companies integrate social and ecological concerns into their corporate activities and relationships with stakeholders."

World Business Council for Sustainable Development has defined CSR as: "The continuing commitment by business to behave ethically and contribute to economic development, while improving the quality of life of the workforce and their families as well as of the local community and society at large."

The CSR approach is holistic and integrated with the core business strategy for addressing social and environmental impacts of businesses. It needs to address the well-being of all stakeholders and not just the company’s shareholders. Whereas, the philanthropic activities are only a small part of CSR, which otherwise constitutes a much larger set of activities entailing strategic business benefits.

There can be three different types of CSR:

1. **Ethical CSR**: Morally mandatory fulfillment of a firm’s economic responsibilities, legal responsibilities, and ethical responsibilities.

2. **Altruistic CSR**: Fulfillment of an organization’s philanthropic responsibilities, going beyond preventing possible harms (ethical CSR) to helping alleviate public welfare deficiencies, regardless of whether or not this will benefit the business itself.

3. **Strategic CSR**: Caring corporate community service activities that accomplish strategic business goals.
CSR should be the root of all business. Businesses are to make profit, but CSR is about earning responsible profit. CSR can be a strategic model to enhance brand equity. Through contributing to social and environmental development, good relation with stakeholders and community, responsible behavior, sustainable approach and best practices will eventually lead to business transparency, consistency and success. Strategic CSR can strengthen its brand equity and build positive image, preference, identity, recognition, value, awareness, competitive advantage and branding of a business to earn responsible profit. Business can only gain credibility through respecting and protecting the people and planet to move towards "Sustainability for a better Future!"
Denmark’s recent Ambassador to Bangladesh, Mrs Hanne Fugl Eskjær, presented her credentials to the President of Bangladesh last September 2013.

Before her posting in Dhaka, Mrs Hanne Fugl Eskjær held a position as Deputy Head of the Middle East and North Africa Department at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Copenhagen, Denmark. Earlier postings have been in Syria, the Czech Republic and at the UN mission in New York.
Dear Readers,

CSR is very important to Danish companies as well as to the Danish Government and we are engaged in CSR through a variety of projects and interventions.

The Embassy’s primary tool for CSR support is Danida Business Partnerships (DBP). DBP supports knowledge transfer and capacity building from Denmark to Bangladesh with an aim to creating growth and employment in Bangladesh. For more than 15 years the Danish Embassy in Dhaka has supported business to business co-operations, always with a focus on sustainability and CSR. We have more than 100 projects behind us. Some of the sectors in focus have been shipbuilding, ICT, Textiles and the Fisheries business. We have contributed to the creation of several thousand jobs in Bangladesh and at the same time supported Danish companies who wanted to come here and invest. You can learn more about DBP on http://um.dk/en/danida-en/activities/business/partnerships.

Below you can find a couple of good examples of our projects:

**IT Training School for Women**

DBP is currently supporting a partnership between Intercity.dk and PrimeTech to train and educate women, primarily single mothers and other women who under normal circumstances would have difficulties in getting a job in the IT sector - and provide them with a job as software testers upon successful completion of their training. The project will not only empower women financially but also improve the economic condition of their families.

**Shed light on the countryside**

Eurotex and Jaya Knitting are being supported by DBP to establish commercial knitting units in the countryside of Bangladesh, employing women as the key resource. The aim is to address one of the major socio-economic challenges in Bangladesh namely that RMG production is concentrated around the big cities. Therefore mass migration takes place and creates income gaps between the countryside and the major cities. It is often the women in the rural areas that are most exposed to poverty and this program contributes directly to the empowerment of these women as well as the development of the local community.

**The new National CSR Guideline for Bangladesh**

I am also happy to announce that we are supporting the CSR Centre in developing a National CSR Guideline for Bangladesh. With the new tool, which is expected to be finished by the end of this year, Bangladesh will have a good way of ensuring that CSR is present in all business activities.

**Other CSR Activities**

At the Danish Embassy we also ensure strategically with our trade council clients on incorporating CSR in their business here in Bangladesh. Among others we have been conducting several CSR supplier reviews for Danish companies which enable them to take a more proactive CSR view on their activities here.

Furthermore, Danida is supporting a number of CSR initiatives driven by the members of the Danish Initiative for Ethical Trading, focusing on social dialog and sustainable production. We are excited to see these projects take off, make an impact and we will follow them closely.

By Hanne Fugl Eskjær
In an open market economy, the Private Sector plays a very significant role in the economic development of a country. It is also an effective economic agent and makes substantial contributions to the overall economic development of the country. The manufacturing and productive activity of the Private Sector in Bangladesh is gaining increasing momentum. The footprint of Bangladesh’s Private Sector, with the support of global enterprises has been expanding rapidly. In this context, their potential and power to bring about positive change in the lives of millions of people is undeniable.

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) is still a new concept in Bangladesh. Many still do not understand the actual meaning of CSR and usually equate it with ‘charity’ or ‘philanthropy’. Responsible Business Conduct should not only be the agenda for businesses to adopt but Government and the entire society must address the issue. There is a gap of sufficient responsibility in every sector. The private sector needs to change and the mindset of responsibility should be embedded in action.

The CSR Centre being the single CSR hub in the country, initiated by the Private Sector in 2007, has been playing an important role in creating sensitization of the CSR agenda at a national, regional and international level.

Till date, evidence indicates that current approaches to CSR by the business sector have been largely fragmented- that it has often been welfare or technology driven. While these approaches benefit people to some extent, they do not always address the source of these challenges, and are therefore unsustainable over time. Companies that are willing to contribute and link to sustainable development find it challenging in engaging and implementing CSR into their activities. An intelligent CSR approach has to be based on a global understanding of CSR using various parameters. In this context it must look at best practices, human rights, labor rights and environmental & climate change issues in Bangladesh and across the world, in reference to the competitive advantage of CSR in a heightened business context, and companies’ social impacts and engagements.

Accordingly many corporations implementing a CSR program is just a “make-up” to brand their companies as a socially responsible company. Corporate Social Responsibility is linked with corporate respect for human rights principles and standards. CSR is expected to be a “bridge” to integrate and synthesize the two different interests of society and corporations. People in the community in which companies operate always accuse that the companies are conducting human rights violation to the people around their business operations which creates tension between businesses and society. A good bottom-up CSR policy can assist all stakeholders to resolve the issues comprehensively in terms of human rights, environmental damages, accusations, anti-corruption, children’s rights etc. A comprehensive CSR policy or guideline is able to guide both companies and society to stand and walk together and live in harmony.
It has been realized through various forums that many of the leading sectors and business associations have shown keen interest in having a “National level Guideline to engage in CSR and to link this with Sustainable Development”. To manifest the full potential of the private sector, it is essential that Bangladesh develops a framework for strategic intervention that substantially contributes to reducing or eliminating poverty and deprivation, and enhance welfare of the poor and excluded communities across the country, in addition to implementing CSR within companies’ core business strategies. These strategies have to be broad-based in conception to enhancing people’s well being. They have to ensure the fulfillment of their fundamental human rights and entitlements and take responsibility for those directly affected by the companies’ activities. It should address companies on how to engage and implement CSR.

As CSR is not philanthropy and CSR activities are purely voluntary- it is what companies like to do in order to go beyond any statutory requirement or obligation provided by the State. To provide companies with guidance in dealing with these, while working closely within the framework of national aspirations and policies, a form of “National CSR Guideline for Private Sector led Growth in Bangladesh” should be developed for a nation as a whole. Such enterprises that have trans-national presence can benefit from using these guidelines for expansion into global markets. Also to encourage both local and national companies to engage in effective CSR practices which can benefit the communities and encourage private sector led growth in order to further access global markets and pro-actively build upon national standards for products and services and enhance business opportunities. This gives a clear indication for Public-Private Partnerships.

As part of this initiative, on developing a “National CSR Guideline for Bangladesh”, CSR Centre had informal discussions with representatives from the RMG sector, Telecom sector and Agricultural sector, as well with others including the Bangladesh Bank and Ministry of Planning on such a process that can be private sector growth focused. Apart from the National Guideline, CSR Centre is also developing the “National CSR Policy for Children” which will focus on the company’s responsibility towards the rights of the children and provide them a guideline on how to respect and protect children’s rights in line with the Child Rights and Business Principles (CRBP).
Global Context of CSR

Every company is part of the community and inevitably is affected by consumer expectations. The traditional contract between community and private industry has changed in the wake of globalization, the establishment of a worldwide network of economic ties and rapid technological advances. As companies develop global value chains, there are increasing expectations that they will behave responsibly.

Today, many companies are active in a variety of countries on working across their value chains. They maintain production facilities all over the world work with suppliers in different continents and sell their products in the global market.

As the companies do business in the international arena, they are faced with economic, political and social challenges. In less developed countries, the government’s failure to solve problems means an increase in the influence and responsibility of global players and the businesses. In this context, corporate social responsibility can play an important role in ensuring fairness in the globalization process. Social investments also help companies open up new markets, retain employees and suppliers, minimize risks and develop country-specific products.

CSR in Developed Countries

CSR primarily began as a Northern concept. As such, it was characterized by fairly unregulated markets for labour and capital, low levels of welfare state provision, and a high appreciation of individual freedom and responsibility. Consequently, many social issues, such as education, healthcare, or community investment have traditionally been at the core of CSR.

In other parts of the world, most notably Europe, the Far East, and Australasia, however, there has always been a stronger tendency to address social issues through governmental policies and collective action. Many issues that Northern companies would typically boast about as CSR on their websites, such as the provision of healthcare or fighting climate change, have not appeared until recently on the screens of continental European companies. The reason for this is that these issues have traditionally been considered a task for governments or, in other words, the corporate responsibility for social issues has been the object of codified and mandatory regulation.

Countries such as Japan, and to a lesser degree South Korea and Taiwan, are considered fairly similar to continental Europe in terms of the institutional context for CSR.

The reasons for the rise of CSR in Europe and in these developed economies in the Far East in recent years are several. To begin with, MNCs with their home base in such countries are challenged to implement more CSR in their operations located in countries with poor governance and low levels of state provision of public services, human rights protection, or environmental protection. Furthermore, some of these developed economies have undergone substantial overhauls of their welfare systems and regulatory frameworks, resulting in lesser degrees of state attention to social issues and more discretion for private actors.

It can also be observed that most developed countries have specific domestic CSR issues. For instance, many European countries see CSR specifically with regard to the protection of the natural environment, while the CSR debate in the Far East prominently features issues of corporate governance and transparency in large conglomerates. Often the CSR debate in a country reflects longstanding and ongoing deliberations in society at large: for instance in Australia and South Africa, considerable expectations have been directed towards companies to address and uphold rights of aboriginal and black people respectively, or to contribute to their economic empowerment more generally.
CSR in Developing Countries

The activities of Western MNCs in developing countries have been a major driver behind the recent surge in CSR. Developing countries can at times be characterized by various features that can offer considerable scope for the exercise of CSR. These include low standards for working conditions and environmental protection, high corruption, oppressive regimes with low regard for human rights, poor provision of healthcare and education, as well as low levels of per capita income and foreign direct investment. Although this is not a fair representation of all developing country contexts at all times, the main challenge for MNCs from the developed world when they are faced with such circumstances lies in conducting their business in a way that would be considered socially responsible in their respective home countries.

It is important to recognize that a growing number of domestic companies in developing nations have also shown an interest in CSR. The main CSR issues these companies are concerned with include contributions to enhance the infrastructure and transport, health care, education and to serve as examples of good governance.

The debate in the global South has begun to shift from understanding CSR towards thinking of responsible behavior more in terms of development. As governments alone cannot change the socio-economic development of a country, it is here where one of the main responsibilities of business can be seen. Implementing CSR in this sense would therefore require MNCs to conduct business and bring FDI to developing countries in the first place, and then ensure that the wealth created is locked into development. This role of MNCs, however, is not uncontested. According to the skeptics, responsible corporate behavior in the developing world is an issue that cannot be left to the voluntary discretion of business but needs to be addressed by more stringent regulation in their home countries in the global North.

CSR Trends in Bangladesh

Globalization has made CSR practice an imperative for Bangladesh business. The country has to adapt itself to the process of globalization, as access of cross-national integration of communication and information are creating consciousness and sense of necessity for practicing CSR. But the overall status of CSR in Bangladesh is still meager. CSR concepts and practices in Bangladesh have a long history of philanthropic activities. These philanthropic activities include donations to different charitable organizations, direct payment to the vulnerable population and to the religious institutions. Most businesses are involved in community development work in the form of charity without having any definite policy regarding the expenses or any concrete motive regarding return on investments in many instances. Moreover, most of the SMEs fall under the informal sector having insufficient management structure and resources to address the social and environmental issues. These limitations drive the top management of local companies to think only about the profit maximization rather than doing business considering the triple bottom line: Profit, Planet and People (TBL).

There has been increasing pressure on national and multinational corporations in Bangladesh to consider the social implications of their actions. Companies are now aware of it because being a part of the global market; it is really difficult to ignore CSR implications. Bangladeshi firms are to focus on CSR not only for improving corporate governance, labour rights, fair treatment of workers, community development and environment management, but also for industrialization and ensuring global market access.

A number of corporations are now following an increased commitment to CSR beyond just profit making and compliance with regulation. It is found that initiatives in CSR activities in Bangladesh are pioneered by MNCs. Since Bangladesh is now exposed to global standards, it can be anticipated that the CSR agenda in Bangladesh will continue to be extended. Firms are now trying to uphold their corporate image of socially responsible firms and consequently influence consumers buying decisions in favor of the goods and services marketed by them.
CSR Guidelines and Principles

Five instruments together make up an evolving and increasingly coherent global framework for CSR:

**The OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises**

The OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises are far reaching recommendations for responsible business conduct that 44 adhering governments – representing all regions of the world and accounting for 85% of foreign direct investment – encourage their enterprises to observe wherever they operate.

**The UN Global Compact**

The UN Global Compact asks companies to embrace, support and enact, within their sphere of influence, a set of core values in the areas of human rights, labour standards, the environment and anti-corruption. Companies can sign up to the UN Global Compact, which subsequently commits them to submit a yearly Communication on Progress Report (COP).

**The ISO 26000 Guidance Standard**

The ISO 26000 guidance standard on social responsibility is a voluntary international standard. It provides guidance rather than requirements, so it cannot be certified, unlike some other well-known ISO standards. It is aimed at all types of organizations, not just enterprises.

**The UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights**

The UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights define what governments and enterprises should do to avoid and address possible negative impacts on human rights by enterprises.

**International Labour Organization Tripartite Declaration of Principles Concerning Multinational Enterprises on Social Policy**

This declaration offers guidelines to multinational enterprises, governments, and employers’ and workers’ organizations in such areas as employment, training, conditions of work and life, and industrial relations. This declaration is the only ILO text that is also addressed to enterprises.
The United Nations Global Compact, also known as the Global Compact or UNGC, is a United Nations initiative to encourage businesses worldwide to adopt sustainable and socially responsible policies. The United Nations Global Compact is a call to companies everywhere to voluntarily align their operations and strategies with ten universally accepted principles in the areas of human rights, labour, environment and anti-corruption, and to take actions in support of UN goals and issues such as the Millennium Development Goals. By doing so, business, as a primary driver of globalization, can help ensure that markets, commerce, technology and finance advance in ways that benefit economies and societies everywhere. The UN Global Compact is a leadership platform for the development, implementation and disclosure of responsible corporate policies and practices. Under the Compact, companies are brought together with UN agencies, labour groups and civil society organizations to work in partnership and share best practices and models for sustainable growth.

The UN Global Compact is the world’s largest voluntary corporate sustainability initiative with over 12000 participants which include 8000 corporate signatories and 4000 other stakeholder groups based in 145 countries – representing nearly every industry sector and size, and hailing equally from developed and developing countries. Companies based in 101 nations have convened to establish self-actualizing Global Compact Local Networks. Local Networks serve an essential role in rooting the UN Global Compact within different national contexts— and their distinct economic, cultural and linguistic needs.

The UN Global Compact works toward the vision of a sustainable and inclusive global economy which delivers lasting benefits to people, communities, and markets.

For more information: www.unglobalcompact.org
To help realize this vision, the initiative seeks to:

1. Mainstream the Global Compact’s Ten Principles in business strategy and operations around the world; and
2. Catalyze business actions in support of UN goals and issues, with emphasis on collaboration and collective action.

The Compact was announced by the then UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan in an address to *The World Economic Forum* in year 1999, and was officially launched at UN Headquarters in New York in year 2000. It is now chaired by H.E. Ban Ki-Moon, Secretary-General of the United Nations.


### The Ten Principles of the United Nations Global Compact

The UN Global Compact’s ten principles in the areas of human rights, labour, the environment and anti-corruption enjoy universal consensus and are derived from:

- The Universal Declaration of Human Rights
- The International Labour Organization’s Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work
- The Rio Declaration on Environment and Development
- The United Nations Convention Against Corruption

The UN Global Compact asks companies to embrace, support and enact, within their sphere of influence, a set of core values in the areas of human rights, labour standards, the environment and anti-corruption:
Global Compact Local Networks (GCLNs) provide a platform for participating companies and non-business stakeholders to advance the UN Global Compact and its principles at the local level. With approximately 101 established and emerging networks around the world, GCLNs serve an essential role in rooting the Global Compact within national contexts and advancing local priorities and needs. All companies are encouraged to participate in their Local Network, as well as engaging in countries where they have operations.

The Global Compact Local Network was formally launched in Bangladesh in January 2009. It is a start that augurs well for the future given that the Global Compact is expected to receive more coverage in the country in the coming years. Since 2002, BEI has been active in promoting the principles in Bangladesh. In September 2007, CSR Centre came on board to take forward the UNGC agenda in Bangladesh. At present, BEI and CSR Centre together comprise the principal promoters of the UNGC and its principles among the Bangladeshi signatories. CSR Centre has significantly contributed to increasing the promotion of these ideals in the fabric of the Bangladeshi business community by contributing to achieving the human development targets set in the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in Bangladesh through private sector led growth.

Currently, there are 50 Bangladeshi signatories to the Compact. By becoming a member of the UNGC’s Local Network (UNGCLN), companies, as the primary driver of globalization, can help ensure that markets, commerce, technology and finance advance in ways that benefit Bangladesh and contribute to a more sustainable and inclusive global economy. The private sector in Bangladesh can bolster a positive image of the country and can put Bangladesh on the map by highlighting the private sector’s entrepreneurial progress in the last two decades.

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**About the Global Compact Local Networks**

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**UN Global Compact Local Network Bangladesh**

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**How to Participate**

The United Nations Global Compact is a platform for business and non-business entities to proactively network and engage in areas of human rights, labour, environment, anti-corruption and contributing to UN goals in order to achieve the common objectives of building a sustainable and inclusive global economy. The Global Compact is constantly expanding its reach and enhancing opportunities for engagement.

To participate in the Global Compact and be a signatory member to the compact, please visit www.unglobalcompact.org and follow the links to Home / How to Participate / Apply Now, where you will find steps outlined to apply and register to the Global Compact.

For successful submission of application, the organization should follow 3 steps

**Step 1**: Review the Online Application Guideline

**Step 2**: Prepare a Letter of Commitment

**Step 3**: Complete the Online Application Form and upload a digital copy of the Letter of Commitment

**Step 4**: Annual contribution depending on the Annual sales/revenue of the organization (only applicable for Business Participation, Non-Business Participation can register for free)
UN Global Compact Business Partnership Hub

While an individual business can make a significant contribution to global challenges, partnerships often lead to greater impact. Such activities ultimately benefit core-business operations by creating new business opportunities, strengthening operating environments, heightening brand awareness and increasing shareholder activity. The business community has expressed growing interest in collaborating with others, but many are challenged to find local opportunities and connect with likeminded companies and organizations.

The UN Global Compact Business Partnership Hub is an interactive, online platform designed to connect businesses with potential partners in support of UN goals and issues. The Business Partnership Hub allows companies to browse through existing partnership projects that are in need of additional support, and to post its own projects that seek new partners. Visitors to the site can leverage its functionality to find relevant projects and introduce themselves to potential partners, enabling organizations to more easily come together and find ways to collectively have a greater positive impact on UN priority areas.

The Business Partnership Hub currently facilitates partnerships in the areas of anti-corruption, climate and energy, social enterprise, water, and connects with the UN-Business Partnership Hub which links the private sector exclusively with potential partners in the UN system.
Mike Baab is a Human Rights Specialist working for the last eight years on improving human rights performance of businesses. He is also a consultant for the UN Working Group on Business and Human Rights and a researcher for International Alert.

Mike is also one of the key advisors to developing the Human Rights and Business Country Guide, which was launched last year at the second Annual Forum of the UN Working Group on Business and Human Rights in Geneva. It is the first free online resource for companies to identify, assess and address human rights conditions in their operations and supply chains around the world. The Country Guide aims to describe human rights conditions in law and practice in more than 100 countries including Bangladesh and provide companies with practical advice for preventing and mitigating violations.

Business and Human Rights

By Mike Baab

There has never been more attention on the social impacts of companies than right now. In Bangladesh, Rana Plaza brought international attention to a sector—ready-made garment production—that consumers and multinational brands had ignored for far too long.

In the last 10 years, it seems every country has had a case in for the negative impacts of its business sector. In China it was worker suicides at electronics manufacturer FoxConn. In South Africa, it was clashes between security forces and workers during the Marikana miners’ strike. In Russia and Qatar, it was exploitation of migrant workers to construct sporting facilities.

These scandals did not only unfold in developing countries. Germany has been the subject of international attention for the conditions of workers at Amazon.com warehouses. In America, 2013 saw some of the largest strikes of fast-food workers in decades.

Name just about any country, and you can find a case where the human rights impacts of a company have resulted in international scrutiny and domestic outrage.

The cumulative effect of these cases has been unprecedented attention on the community impacts and labour practices of the private sector. Consumers are increasingly willing to pay more for brands that demonstrate their commitment to sustainable sourcing.
and decent working conditions. Environmental and labour certifications and social audits ensure that these commitments are carried out.

Investors are also monitoring the social impacts of companies, through shareholder resolutions and socially responsible investing. Civil society organizations are building links and applying technologies that allow them to identify and report human rights abuses by companies worldwide in a matter of seconds.

At the government level, laws such as the UK Bribery Act and the United States’ Dodd-Frank Act have imposed responsibilities on companies to prevent corrupt practices and report their mineral sourcing practices, respectively, regardless of where they operate. The Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative and the Kimberly Process have set a model of tripartite engagement and systematic reporting that is now serving as a model for other sectors.

International institutions, recognizing their critical role as a link between global companies and the limited jurisdictions of home and host governments, have also jumped into the fray. In 2011, the UN adopted the Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights, which have now been incorporated into the policies and practices of the European Union, International Finance Corporation and Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development.

The list of positive initiatives and projects could fill a book. Indeed, it has already filled many. The real question is not whether these efforts are taking place, but whether they are having any impact. Has the human rights performance of companies improved? Are the conditions of employees and communities better now than they were in the past?

Unfortunately, this question is more difficult to answer. While the number of companies with demonstrated commitment to sustainability has grown, new companies, new markets and new negative impacts have also emerged.

As defined in the UN Guiding Principles, states have the responsibility to prevent human rights abuses by companies; businesses have the duty to respect human rights no matter where or how they operate; and victims of corporate abuses must have access to an effective remedy. The fact that these principles are broadly accepted by governments, businesses and civil society organizations around the world is itself a significant achievement. It marks the end of the debate about roles and responsibilities, and the beginning of a joint effort to define concrete obligations under those responsibilities.

But still, as we look back at the decades-long battle to define standards of private-sector responsibility and the ongoing effort to implement those standards, it is important that we maintain our focus on the ultimate goal: Preventing human rights violations and improving human rights conditions for workers and communities around the world.

At our recent multi-stakeholder forum in Dhaka, co-hosted with the CSR Centre, I had the opportunity to ask many of our participants, ‘would you rather be a Bangladeshi garment worker now, or 20 years ago?’ Almost unanimously, they answered ‘now.’

We should all find this encouraging. This does not mean, however, that our work is over. It means it has just begun.
The United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights (UNGPs) are a global standard for preventing and addressing the risk of adverse impacts on human rights linked to business activity. In 2011, the United Nations Human Rights Council unanimously endorsed the Guiding Principles for Business and Human Rights, making the UN “Protect, Respect andRemedy” Framework for Business and Human Rights the first corporate human rights responsibility initiative to be endorsed by the United Nations.

The UNGPs Framework rests on three pillars:
Corporate Social Responsibility in the Textile & Ready Made Garments Sector

From spinning to weaving, from knitwear to leisurewear and high street fashions, the textiles and clothing industry is Bangladesh’s biggest export earner accounting up to 80% of Bangladesh’s exports. Our factories design and produce for the world’s leading brands and retailers. It has provided huge opportunities for employment and is the largest sector to employ women. One of the radical changes for women empowerment in the country. This rapidly growing sector of the Bangladeshi economy offers a unique competitive edge that supports profitable expansion into new strategic markets.
Since the age of 16, the former child labourer Nazma Akter has been campaigning for better working conditions in the textile factories of Bangladesh. Today she creates space for women and workers—where they can learn about their rights. From a simple front line worker to a renowned Labour Activist, she has come up a long way. Today Akter is the best-known trade unionist of the country. She is the founder of AWAJ Foundation, an organization that defends the rights of garment workers in Bangladesh. She is also the President of Sommilito Garments Sramik Federation. Last year she received the Female Leader of the Year Award and recently she has been invited at the prestigious Global Female Leaders Summit as a speaker.

An Interview of Nazma Akter by the CSR Centre

Tell us a little about yourself and how you came across to this Garments industry?

“I was born and bought up in Dhaka. My family members came from the village and were settled in Dhaka. I grew up, started working and got married here. My first job was in the garments factory. We used to live in Shantibagh. I joined school in Shantibagh Ershad School. When I got to standard five, at the age of eleven, I had to drop out from school and start working. I started working in a garments factory called Shams Garments Ltd. It was back in 1986, when I joined the workforce. I was very young at that time. I worked there for six months and then moved to another garments factory, and from there my life went rolling on…”

How did you make this journey from a frontline garment worker to today’s Activist Nazma Akter?

“I worked in factories, went through lot of hardships and was participating in meetings, worker’s right movement etc. There were lots of issues. When I was working, we faced a lot of problems: on-time payments, job insecurity, maternity issues, freedom of association etc. A lot has been changed since then. Bangladesh Labor Law has been introduced to secure peace in the industrial arena. Both workers and employers are now aware of the human rights issues. However, poor working conditions still exist and catastrophes occur due to lack of proper monitoring and poor implementation of the Labor Law and other rules and regulations. Maybe all these issues have chosen me to be here today.

From childhood I always wanted to do something. I wanted to become a scientist. I was a little too tomboyish at my young age. I wanted to invent something of my own, but I didn’t have that privilege or opportunity.
It was my wish from the very young age that, I wanted to do something, though my dream of becoming a scientist didn’t work out in any way, but when I came to work in this sector I got to know a lot of other new things. I worked in the factories for seven years. And I feel today the work I do in my position, I feel truly privileged! How many can hardly get a chance to work like me? So whatever I am today and whatever I do, I feel it is a lot for me to achieve. Maybe this is what I am good at, so my fate has put me in this place which I never thought I would be in."

From your experiences and struggles for rights like workers rights and labour rights on occupational health and safety, hazardous workplace etc, what is your notion on the level of change? Do you think things have improved or is it still the same as was in the past?

“In the 80’s the garments factories and workshops used to operate in the shared residential buildings. There was no separate infrastructure for the factories, but at that time there weren’t as much accidents happening like nowadays! Slowly the sector grew like mushroom without any regulation. With globalization and development, high buildings have increased in the country. Though a lot of development activities are taking place, but these developments is also leading to some worse situations, which are the scary examples like Tazreen Garments and Rana Plaza incidents. Before catastrophe like this did not occur much, at least there wasn’t low quality infrastructure. Now it is seen that the standard of infrastructure of most building are not good."

What is the reason for this?

“The reason is because proper implementation of the laws is not taking place. Now who to blame for, the owner or who else? For example if a factory takes permission for its operation for a five storied building from the government but makes it to a ten storied building, who will be liable for this? For this obviously the owner is liable, the manufacturer who took the rent is responsible. The government’s responsibility is to monitor and evaluate these factories. It is the state’s responsibility to monitor that people follow rules and regulations. Earlier the factories were small and the owners used to treat the workers as family members, but now factory operations are bigger and the trend that owner are leaving the whole responsibility to the mid-level managers, where these mid-level managers are treating these employees whatever way they like. These mid-level managers are not trained enough to deal with the poor workers."

How do you want to see this Garments Sector in the future?

“I want to see this garments sector as an established industry. Since this sector is one of the major revenue earners of the country, so it is very important for us to secure this sector. For this the government, owners and the workers association can work together to sketch out and establish garment districts—special areas where the factories will be set up with appropriate infrastructure. Right now, gas, electricity, transportation, roads, and construction are all not appropriate for the demands placed on them. Most of the garment industry is established by local manufacturers, and the government is not paying attention. That is why, if we want better working conditions for the industry, we need to set up proper industrial areas where the government provides land, where we could have the proper space to have the factory, workers’ dormitories, irrigation, health clinics, everything we need. And these need not be high-rise buildings. Most of the garment industry is set up today in multi-story buildings which have unhealthy working conditions, few emergency exits, little fire protection, and poor construction. These are all issues, and this is why the government, including our American and European friends need to work together to help build the right infrastructure for the garment industry. I think CSR here, can play an important role to achieve this initiative and companies can come forward to develop a sustainable sector for the development of the country.”
When you travel abroad, what is your experience of others' perception of Bangladesh and how would you want them to know our country in the future?

“Well, what to say! It is sad that foreign people have negative thoughts about us and our country. After the Rana Plaza and all, we are going through an image crisis. We have to consider this negativity and make sure that we don’t have to listen or face this anymore.

In future, I would want to see that the workers’ rights are met. I want to see strong relationships between owners and workers of the factories. I want to see that women are empowered; their salaries, wage and living standards are improved. That people coming to this industry to work, have security and prosperity. That people will recognize that they have benefited from this industry. I want to see that this industry will make high quality production and our exports will increase. That Bangladesh will flourish and earn more revenue from this sector, and that it will reach to a standard living space. And this is how I would want that outsiders will see us as…”

What would you want to suggest to all the women of our country?

“My suggestion for all women in Bangladesh, especially for the young girls would be that, whatever capability their family has they should take the right education, should work and work hard, be enthusiastic to become something and be honest at every stage. We don’t want to go for distinguishing men and women, but rather define ourselves where we can place ourselves as useful to humanity and work for the rights of the disadvantaged community. If we want to achieve something, we need to work hard for it. No one will give us our equal rights; it is only us who can earn it. For all women, we have to become more self-independent and responsible towards our work and we should look forward to challenges in life. Everything is possible for us and we can make transitional change towards sustainable development of the country!”
The effect of global warming causes significant disturbances on the global climate such as floods, droughts, cyclones, rising sea-level, scarcity of water and crop losses. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) has revealed the scientific significance and proven evidence that the increasing level of carbon emissions by human activity is the major driver of climate change. The IPCC is the nominated United Nations’ body for research on this issue.

Consuming fossil fuels such as oil, coal and natural gas has dramatically risen in the past century with releasing carbon emissions (CO2) into the atmosphere. The global consumption of energy is continually rising. Therefore, it is necessary to reduce CO2-emissions globally in order to avoid major threats to ecosystems and human health. Consumers increasingly ask retailers and brands, what they do to reduce CO2-emissions. Several initiatives address carbon emissions of companies and products, e.g. the Carbon Performance Improvement Initiative (CPI2) a global initiative to improve energy efficiency in textile and shoe production.

Beyond carbon accounting, companies need to have a proactive attitude towards climate change to achieve substantial reduction of GHG emissions. Enterprises should act as soon as possible, and in a proactive way to avoid, for instance serious or irreversible environmental damages resulting from their activities. Globally business experiences suggest that when properly designed, emission reduction strategies can lead to cost reductions, spur innovation and improve efficiency.

Textile producers have started to take an active role as well by providing transparency about their carbon emissions and by implementing improvement measures systematically. Their benefits from a pro-active carbon management have become a benchmark for producers and retailers as well towards a sustainable textile industry.
In 2010 Viyellatex committed to reduce their Carbon Footprint by 25% by end of year 2013 and become carbon neutral by 2016. As part of benchmarking process Viyellatex engaged Sustain Consulting GmbH in the year 2010 for 3rd party independent audit and started various initiatives to reduce carbon emission. The whole objective of this project is to provide transparency about greenhouse gas emissions according to international accounting methodology towards clients, stakeholders and other textile producers. Recently (end 2013) Viyellatex evaluated their carbon footprint audit and they have successfully reduced their overall carbon footprint by 25%.

Saving Measures 2013
Viyellatex is highly committed for sustainable textile production. The management has put major focus on improving energy efficiency and reducing carbon emissions. Viyellatex was one of the first textile producers to publish a carbon footprint report at all. Awareness raising, strict maintenance, application of advanced technologies, purchase of energy efficient equipment, research and investments to reduce energy use are well established at Viyellatex.

The several Energy Saving Measures that have been taken in year 2012 / 2013 at Viyellatex:

- Replacement of all conventional lights by efficient one (T5 and LED).
- Replacement of all conventional motors of sewing machines by servo-motors which require only half of electricity use.
- Installation of heat recovery for condensate from steam. The waste heat of condensate is used to pre-heat feed water for boiler.
- Use of evaporative cooling instead of conventional AC.
- Adoption of heat recovery for absorption chillers from waste heat from generators.

Significant savings of 4.5 million m natural gas have been achieved by these measures. All measures have been implemented successfully. Viyellatex has taken a systematic approach to roll-out energy-efficient technologies in all areas and processes. Viyellatex reports, that there were no problems in implementing these issues. It just takes management commitment and willingness to move forward – which has been proven an important success-factor for Viyellatex to achieve a front runner position in sustainable business at all.
Reducing Environmental Impacts through Innovation

Case-study: Viyellatex Group

Viyellatex has taken certain sustainability initiatives that not only save resources for the country or protect the environment from the harmful by-products of its operations but also cost effective for the company. Their main focus is to incorporate the 3 R’s – Reduce, Reuse and Recycle into all initiatives.

Some of the initiatives include:
- Re-using treated water,
- Harvesting rain-water,
- Reusing utility water,
- Producing organic fertilizer.

Re-using treated water – treated waste-water from the ETP is re-used for daily toilet flushing of 9000 workers in the premises, saving almost 100 million liters of underground water per year.

Reusing utility water - Water used daily by the management staff in the wash basin is re-used for gardening around the main premises. This initiative saves about 500 liters of water per day.

Harvesting rain-water – The 250,000 sq. ft roof top rain water harvesting system is used for fabric dyeing, washing and other purposes, saving approximately 28 million liters of underground water every year.

Recycling organic waste – 30 tons of organic compost fertilizer is produced monthly. Leftovers from lunch of employees along with kitchen waste from the surrounding area, cotton dust from the spinning mill, cow dung, water hyacinth and other natural ingredients are used to make the fertilizer. Tests done by the Department of Environment (DOE) of Bangladesh have revealed that the fertilizer is very potent, but till date it has only been used at the tea estate.
Human resource is the major driving force of Epyllion Group whose entity is “Human Spirit”. Over the past 19 years Epyllion Group has contributed to unveil human spirit for harmonious growth of earth, including all of its surroundings. The human component of Epyllion Group gets the inspiration to give the very best from its well integrated and managed corporate governance. It is the culture of the group that share vision, mission and plan to explore all difficulties in to possibilities.

Epyllion Group supports the Human Rights value of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and all - internationally accepted standard for the protection and defense of human rights, because Epyllion believes in empowering the human spirit. The Epyllion Group’s Code of Conduct and Business Principles clearly states to respect basic human rights in all its aspects and there is a ZERO TOLERANCE policy in the human rights endeavor. Epyllion Group abiding by the national legislations and company’s own policies maintains ethical and decent work environment and ensures that no employees engage themselves in, directly or indirectly in any activity that exploits another individual within or beyond the company territory. This applies to everyone with whom it conducts business.

The Code of Conduct is one of the ways to put the theme “Unveil human spirit” into practice. Epyllion’s Code of Conduct is build around the recognition that everything in connection to Epyllion’s work will be and should be measured against the highest possible standards of ethical business conduct.

### Lifting the Human Spirit

#### Case-study: Epyllion Group

#### Incentive and facilities to uphold employee motivation

Employees endorse a company to achieve its best. Because a motivated employee puts his/her best skills and efficiency forward and thus achieves the best quality products and services that ultimately bring success to the company. Skilled and motivated human resources are one of the core strengths of Epyllion Group. The company tries to enhance employee assistance program in various ways to stimulate the skill and dedication of the employees. There are incentives in attendance and productivity for the workers, lunch subsidy for all employees, transportation service, dormitory services, best employee/ line/ performer awards, annual cultural program, annual sports programs (volley ball, football and cricket), interest-free loan, effective in-house and external training facilities, regular awareness programs, free snacks for workers from company’s own bakery unit to confirm best hygienic foods and “new born Baby Gift” for all employees.

Epyllion publishes a quarterly magazine, “Amader Kotha” for their employees. The magazine is the reflection of employees own thoughts, feelings, news and write-ups. This is an open door for the employees to express themselves and acts as a recreation for to release their life stress.

Epyllion has established an individual bakery unit, Epy Toast to provide hygienic snacks for the employees. Free snacks are distributed among the workers. It has also leased a mango garden to grow fruits organically, without using any pesticides to provide fresh fruits to all employees. All employees are entitled to get bakery product from Epy Toast and garden fruits at subsidized prices.
Background of the Study

The minimum wage of the export-oriented apparels sector or ready-made garment sector (hereinafter RMG sector) in Bangladesh was revised in recent times under the guidance of the ‘Minimum Wage Board’. The Board was convened in June 2013 and the gazette of latest revision was published in December, 2013 after the last revision of the minimum wage of the RMG sector was made in October, 2010.

There are three major issues which are responsible for making the process always a highly debated and arguable concern of revision of the minimum wage in the RMG sector. Firstly, no proper definition is available on the minimum wage in the national rules and regulations (Labour Act 2006; Amended Labour Act 2013); secondly, there is a short of acceptable methodology for estimating the minimum wage which could be pursued by the Board; and finally, there is a dearth of sector-specific and macroeconomic data on key indicators in the public domain. The negotiation process of finalising the revised wage figure for workers could be more polished and would be more decent to major stakeholder, if the Board proposed the wage based on an acceptable definition and methodology.

The three major areas of focus are a) present a definition of a minimum wage based on globally accepted norms and legal structures; b) propose a method for estimating the minimum wage for the RMG sector; and c) provide a number of recommendations based on a number of observations made during this research process including the required minimum wages.

Global Perspective of Minimum Wage

The basic needs of workers including their families and the economic factors including the requirements of economic development are two key elements of ILO Minimum Wage Fixing Convention, 1970 (No. 131). Living wage concept is the most closer concept amongst various concepts on minimum wage which has been believed as a human right by the international community. The concept of living wage can be explained as a wage that is adequate to cover up the basic needs of workers and their families and make available some discretionary income. According to recent research conducted by ILO, four elements which has to be taken into consideration, include a) should be sufficient to support a worker and his or her family; b) should considered as decent or “basic needs” including food, clothing, and shelter; in addition some discretionary income; c) should be appropriate for the society and the time; and d) should be a take-home pay which is earned during the working hour. The ILO Committee of Experts declared in 1992: the ultimate objective of the ILO minimum wage Conventions is to provide workers a satisfactory standard of minimum wage which will be sufficient for worker and his or her family.

The concept of minimum wage has already been legally established in several developing countries like India, Brazil, Mexico and Namibia and they have included specific legal provisions regard to the living wage concept. As the procedure of determining the minimum wage differs country to country, India and China pursue a decentralized policy where Bangladesh follows a nation-wide sectoral approach. For most of the countries basic needs of workers and their families is the major considered factor for determining minimum wage. In case of Bangladesh a bunch of important factors including basic needs, as well as growth, productivity and capacity of the enterprise supposed to consider for determining the minimum wage.

Minimum Wage in the Bangladesh’s RMG Sector Rules and Regulation

Though the minimum wage is a vital policy instrument, in Bangladesh the term minimum wage is however not defined in the Bangladeshi Labour Act 2006 or in the Amended Labour Act. Nevertheless, the consideration of worker’s cost of living and standard of living is stated in an article in the Labour Act regarding the wage setting in Minimum Wage Board.

Minimum Wage Structure:

Conceptually the minimum wage is to be set at a level which covers the basic needs of the lowest earned workers on the...
job-ladder. But in Bangladesh at the time of minimum wage revision, it considers all the grades (grade 1 to 7 workers) of worker instead of a particular grade (grade 7 work). In accordance with the last revision of the minimum wages, grade 7 worker’s entitled wage was Tk.3000 per month in which Tk.2000 as basic, Tk.800 as house rent (40 per cent of the basic) and Tk.200 as medical allowances. At the point of the minimum wage last revision, though minimum wage for entry-level workers (grade 7) increased by 80 per cent, a similar level of rise did not take place for workers in other grades (grades 3, 4, 5, and 6). There are some additional payments other than minimum wage provide to workers and these are:

Overtime Payments: There is an overtime culture in the Bangladesh RMG sector, necessary for workers to achieve a take home pay which comes anywhere near to meeting their basic needs.

Fringe benefits: Fringe benefits include attendance allowances, transport allowances, festival bonuses and production bonuses, which are also not treated as part of the basic wage in this research.

Annual leave encashment: Another monetary benefit being provided by a number of factories in our sample is the annual leave encashment, i.e. pay received for not taking statutory earned leave.

In-kind benefits: In-kind benefits, such as food, transport, medical care, and child care, are also not provided by all employers and are not guaranteed by law.

Estimation of Minimum Wage:

Methodology

The study has been done by three stages. Firstly, the conceptual and methodological frameworks were developed where theoretical and empirical issues were studied, commencing with a study of ILO knowledge on this issue. In next stage, CPD carried out focus group discussions (FGDs) in August, 2013 with RMG workers in three locations including Ashulia, Tongi and Rampura in the Dhaka district both to collect information about workers’ income and expenditure. A total of 65 male and female workers of different grades participated in those FGDs. At the third stage, analysis of data was carried out based on collected data from FGD and available secondary data using Government statistics on the household income and expenditure of different strata. Minimum wage is defined as a wage that is sufficient to meet the basic needs of workers and their families and provide some discretionary income. Conceptually basic needs stand for standard of living which is more than the necessities of life: food, clothing and shelter together with some additional elements like clean water, healthcare, childcare, transportation, education, energy, and some discretionary income or savings. The calculation of minimum wage in the RMG sector includes the cost of living of a worker and his family. In the current context of Bangladesh RMG sector there is absolutely no room for savings, so this study do not include discretionary income for determining minimum wage.

For the calculation the study considered some specific factors, like:

Two units of analysis in calculating a minimum wage are:

- A married couples with children
- An unmarried worker

• Focus on the workers in the lower pay grades
• Focus on cost of living aspect of the wage determination process
• Export Processing Zones not taken into account
• Focus on greater Dhaka urban area

Results:

1. The Upper Poverty Line: based on national statistical data on family and dependent size and using upper poverty line values. The estimated required monthly income for the married worker is Tk.6919

2. Actual expenditure: based on a real picture of existing expenditures and purchasing power, collected from worker focus groups. A major observation from the field survey is non-food costs are a major expenditure for workers and their families. The effective estimated monthly income for married and unmarried workers is Tk.8349 and Tk.7174 respectively.

3. Model Diet: based on a model diet which incorporates energy and nutritional values rather than just energy values. The estimated required minimum wage for married and unmarried workers would be Tk.14857 and Tk.6750 respectively.
Costs of Living:

The FGDs carried out by CPD with the workers reveal that non-food costs are equally important to food costs for the garment workers. In the case of the main non-food items, costs differ between married and unmarried workers. The main non-food cost items include house rent (15.3 per cent and 7.7 per cent respectively), education (12.9 per cent and 6.9 per cent), and medical (5.0 per cent and 4.3 per cent) and mobile bill (4.7 per cent and 5.9 per cent) respectively. Overall expenditure as well as its distribution varies in different locations. The FGDs disclose that workers did not even receive the legally entitled wages for example: the house rent allowance is provided on a lump-sum basis instead of the legally entitled. It is also found from the FGD that workers are provided various other kinds of payments such as attendance allowance, transport allowance, production allowance and overtime payments. These additional payments ensure an average wage of grade 7 workers of Tk.4150 which is about 42 per cent higher than the legally entitled salary of the workers. There is difference in these allowances in different location which is responsible for the large variation of the overall take-home pay of workers.

Table 2: Structure of Wages and Other Allowances Received by Sample Workers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Basic pay</th>
<th>House rent</th>
<th>Medical allowance</th>
<th>Actual wage</th>
<th>Attendance allowance</th>
<th>Transport allowance</th>
<th>Production allowance</th>
<th>Total overtime allowance</th>
<th>Monthly eid bonus</th>
<th>Take-home pay</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>3434</td>
<td>1012</td>
<td>227</td>
<td>4673</td>
<td>289</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1268</td>
<td>318</td>
<td>6588</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>2805</td>
<td>673</td>
<td>203</td>
<td>3682</td>
<td>293</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>1134</td>
<td>336</td>
<td>5573</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>2586</td>
<td>543</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>3329</td>
<td>286</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1125</td>
<td>251</td>
<td>4991</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>2445</td>
<td>516</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>3161</td>
<td>278</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1039</td>
<td>324</td>
<td>4835</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>2204</td>
<td>517</td>
<td>204</td>
<td>2925</td>
<td>158</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>861</td>
<td>215</td>
<td>4234</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average</td>
<td>2833</td>
<td>723</td>
<td>211</td>
<td>3767</td>
<td>264</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>1115</td>
<td>297</td>
<td>5505</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Recommendations

a) The Minimum Wage Board should acknowledge the definition of minimum wage which covers the basic needs of these workers and their families and gives an element of discretionary income as savings. Additionally, the Board should consider accepting the method suggested by CPD for calculating the minimum wage for workers.

b) Since most of the workers either married or unmarried bear part/full responsibility for their family, the Minimum Wage Board should acknowledge the concept of family as the unit of estimation of workers’ minimum wage. We also recommend that the Minimum Wage Board have to give attention to both food and non-food costs of living of the workers and their families.

c) The study estimates a revised minimum wage using three separate methodologies. Since a minimum wage should be higher than the poverty line CPD propose a minimum wage for grade 7 workers be set at least Tk.8200. Because of the limitations of different categories of factories, the Board may consider applying the minimum wage in a phase-wise manner.

d) For the implementation of the revision of the minimum wage as proposed will require more funds to the manufacturers to bear the added remuneration expenses. If the retailers and buyers offer some assist to accommodate the additional expenses related to the cutting and making (CM) charges, the adjustment of increase in wages could be better implemented.

e) The Minimum Wage Board have to ask for the ministry of labour to implement the minimum wage as per agreed terms and conditions as because most of the workers are less aware about their entitlements according to their grade. In addition, the Board may consider proposing fixing the tenure for workers in each specific grade provided workers in their working life get the opportunity to work at the upper grades which will make the existing wage structure more attractive.

f) We would recommend that similar pieces of research be undertaken on other aspects the Minimum Wage Board may take into account when setting minimum wages which were not being dealt with in this research. Finally we would recommend that a longer term research should be undertaken into wages in the RMG sector – all levels and structures in a broad range of factories - with the aim to building wage statistics in a publicly accessible database.
Corporate Social Responsibility in the ICT & Telecom Sector

The vivacious and thrilling mobile telecom sector has always worked beyond all the expectations in order to turn Bangladesh into one of the fastest growing telecom markets in the world. In May 2013, Bangladesh became the latest nation with at least 100 million active cell phone users according to the Bangladesh Telecommunication Regulatory Commission – a milestone reached so far by only 12 countries in the world. The industry has made a significant contribution to the socio economic development of the country. It is not only the highest contributor to revenue but also attracted the highest amount of Foreign Direct Investment in Bangladesh. Mobile telecom sector is now a lifeline for millions of Bangladeshis’ livelihood and has emerged as the change maker for Bangladesh. On the other hand the Information Technology (IT) is a subject of widespread interest in Bangladesh. The potentiality of the Bangladeshi ICT industry and its impact on the economy has led industry associations and government to take measures for a Vision of a Digital Bangladesh.
Online School

With a vision to be recognized as the most socially responsible mobile operator in Bangladesh and in the corporate sector, Grameenphone’s CSR activities are focused on three areas; Education, health and environment, all in accordance with the United Nations Millennium Development Goals.

The quality of education in Bangladesh suffers largely due to the shortage of schools and the scarcity of teachers, particularly in rural areas. Grameenphone, wanted to find a way to contribute to the growth of the education sector. The result is a concept called "Online School".

In August 2011 Grameenphone launched the country’s first online school in Tongi in partnership with Jaago Foundation and Agni Systems Ltd. Jaago Foundation, a nonprofit civil society organization is responsible for providing on-ground services, run operations of the schools and design curriculum for different classes. Agni System Ltd. provides last mile internet solution for the schools for free of cost. Agni also provides technical support in regards to internet connectivity to Jaago Foundation for the initiative. Grameenphone provides financial and backbone support for internet connectivity for the initiative. Today there are 360 students in 5 schools located in Gazipur, Gaibandha, Rajshahi, Madaripur and Bandarban.

The initiative aims to assure quality education for underprivileged students who live in rural areas and are unable to go to school. The idea of Online School is that the teacher conducts class from a distant location using video conferencing technology with the aid of moderators in the actual class. These moderators, who are from the local community, have no teaching background but can help the teacher in operational issues. It also helps develop teachers who can deliver quality education.

The Online School is a unique idea through which quality education similar to that available in major cities may be provided to the disadvantaged population living at the slums and remote areas.

Online School success

In an early measure of the Online School’s success, grades of the online school students were compared with two demographically similar but non-virtual schools. The performance of the students is comparable, indicating that the students are meeting their targets, despite their distance education.
Robi Axiata Limited has come forward with its ‘Safe Water, Safe Life’ campaign to set up water treatment plants at major communication hubs such as divisional railway stations, bus stations and launch stations to ensure that the travelers have access to clean drinking water. The first Robi Water Treatment Plant came into operation in October 2011 at the central railway station in Dhaka.

This CSR initiative is being implemented in collaboration with Bangladesh Railway. WaterAid Bangladesh provides all the technical support needed for the Project.

Thousands of homeward passengers are benefited from safe drinking water plants at railways stations in Dhaka Airport, Kamlapur, Chittagong, Khulna, Sylhet and Rajshahi.

These water treatment plants can supply around 5000 liter safe drinking water per hour on an average to meet thirst of the passengers. On a busy day more than 76,000 people travel from these stations and are benefited from the safe drinking water plants in Dhaka, Chittagong, Khulna, Sylhet and Rajshahi.

The water supplied by the treatment plant is absolutely safe to drink. A membrane filtration system is installed to purify the water by using ultraviolet light. WaterAid collects random samples from the water tank to monitor the quality of water which they send to the laboratory to ensure purity of water on a regular basis.

“As a socially responsible corporate, Robi Axiata Limited has an extensive CSR program aimed at contributing to social uplift and environmental upkeep. With the vision of enabling opportunities, Robi drives its CSR activities in the domain of education, ICT, health and environment.”
In Bangladesh, availability of timely and appropriate information is a big challenge due to an inefficient extension system. Farmers lack access to relevant and timely information, knowledge about new technologies, skills, practices, ways to collaborate with the market and resources to overcome these limitations. As a result, smallholders are vulnerable to crop related diseases, suffer productivity constraints and fail to take advantage of potential farming opportunities. Poor awareness and lack of understanding of the benefits of information services among farmers are also challenges.

To address these issues, the Bangladesh Institute of ICT in Development (BIID), in collaboration with Katalyst (a multi donor development initiative) and Grameenphone (a leading telecom operator), launched the e-Krishok initiative. E-Krishok (Electronic farmer) is an initiative which is designed to aid the farmers by providing extension and market linkage services from which they can be benefitted in both: in terms of their farming activities and opening up opportunities for selling their produces. e-Krishok aims to bridge the information gap that exists in the agriculture sector and build awareness and capacity of farmers to use ICT-enabled information and advisory services.

Farmers with any problem or query or issue which is related to agro-production can actually go to nearby Information Center / Tele-centers/Cyber Consultation Offices and get all the necessary information. The service is also available in mobile phone via short code 16250. This is indeed a great way to disseminate information which will result economic gain in the long run; thus enabling the farmers to achieve significant growth in income through agricultural activities. The service basket of BIID covered mostly extension related information and advisory services with a network of 150,000 plus farmers and 500 plus network of information center. It has mobile apps as well to actually avail the service from home.

“It was a different experience to get my problems solved over my phone, by which I saved my crop [rice]. I never received a solution so quickly. It will be very easy for me now to call e-Krishok and solve problems,” explains Ekram Hoosain, a farmer from Bagerhat.
In the context of Bangladesh, an efficient and developed financial system is essential for transferring capital from savers to investors and to channelize scarce resources to maximize production, “Financial Market can be thought of as the brain of the entire economic system, the central locus of decision making”. The financial system of Bangladesh consists of Bangladesh Bank (BB) as the Central Bank, 4 State Owned Commercial Banks (SCB), 5 government owned specialized banks, 30 domestic private banks, 12 foreign banks with the numbers continuously rising and 29 non-bank financial institutions. Moreover, MRA has given license to 298 Micro-credit Organizations. The financial system also embraces insurance companies, stock exchanges and co-operative banks.

Corporate Social Responsibility in the Financial Sector
Dr. Atiur Rahman took the helm of the Central Bank of Bangladesh for the past five years, as the 10th Governor of Bangladesh Bank. Dr. Rahman has been a renowned economist in his varied roles as a University Professor, researcher, banker and a leader in pro-poor, environment-friendly and gender-sensitive development paradigms. He is also one of the enthusiastic proponents of CSR in the country.

An Interview of Dr Atiur Rahman by the CSR Centre

You have started the CSR initiative in Bangladesh’s Banking Sector - what was the motivation behind it?

“I still remember that the first time when I stepped into the Central Bank I wanted to make the banking sector more humane!”

When I say more humane, it means it has to be more compliant, it has to be more socially responsible, it has to respect the human rights. I have compiled my lectures on humane banking and called it “Manobik Banking”, so that explains what was in my mind. The first thing I thought that bank runs on people’s monies, the equity owners don’t even own 10% of the total portfolio the banks handle, and the rest 90% comes from the depositors. So they put in money with good faith and confidence, so that it will not be misused or be used against public interest. That this will really help develop the economy and the society, and this money will also be used for social development and it will also help the society, it has to be socially responsible financing.”

What is your views regarding CSR?

“CSR means socially responsible financing from my perspective, of that a portion of it really goes for charity in a way or supporting the disadvantaged or vulnerable groups, but that is a very small portion only. In my view, CSR really focuses on the socially responsible financing, when I say socially responsible financing it means that my financial inclusion becomes my number one objective. So that more people have access to the finance.”

How does Bangladesh Bank contribute to CSR and development?

“We have developed this 10tk- Account, so that all the farmers are getting 10tk-Accounts without any charge. Now there are about 13 million farmers all over Bangladesh who have got this
benefit. We have also extended this to the scavengers or the sweepers, then we have extended it to the social safety net beneficiaries and street children as well. In case of street children, we have been a bit innovative. Because street children don’t have parent or legal guardian, so the children cannot have bank accounts like the school banking which was introduced for others which actually their parents take care of, but here most do not have formal parents so in this case we have asked in the regulation that if an NGO organizes these type of children and takes the ownership of these children, that they are the legal guardians and two of the official of the NGO will sign on behalf of them. While depositing money, the child can give a supporting signature, which is not a legal signature but a supporting one. two of those officials with joint signature that the money will go to the child. After the child becomes 18 yrs of age, they can have their own account. We encourage them to save money so that at one stage they can use the money for their own business or if they want to study etc. I think this is one of the best CSR, in a sense, that you are encouraging a workforce for future entrepreneurship. These children will run the society in future, so they should get acquainted with how the banks are operating. About 226,000 children have opened bank accounts.

**How do you want to embed this in the next few years?**

“We have created a fund called Renewable Energy Fund, so one can fund from there for bio-gas plants, effluent treatment plants, solar energy etc. And there is no collateral mostly for the smaller business. SMEs are accessing this fund at a very low rate of interest. We charge at rate of 5% to the Banks, and the banks add another 4-5% rate. So it’s a very good initiative to promote and support renewable energy system for the small enterprises.”

“We at Bangladesh bank have developed a separate department for CSR and Green banking, so they are pushing forward this agenda. So this is what I call Socially Responsible Financing Practice.”

**What are the regulations that Bangladesh bank is using to monitor CSR approaches?**

“Yes, we have tightened the regulations. Banks really give money for quality kind of investments and our supervision is very high. Sitting here I can see all the supervisory dash board. I know exactly which bank is opening L/C right at the moment and when it will close. So the overall monitoring is very good and very tight. The payment system has miraculously developed. Earlier it used to take a week to clear a cheque whereas now the procedure is exceptionally fast. Electronic cheques are becoming the need of the day. So it is paper-less and we are introducing Green-Banking. So this is also social responsibility. If a company registered with our electronic fund transfer mechanism it can pay the salaries in seconds by electronic fund transfer, the Grameenphone and others are paying their salaries in seconds.”

“We have given environmental risk management guidelines and that guideline every bank has to follow. Every third month they report to us on how much compliant they are, what kind of utility they are using, whether they are going for Green Energy or normal energy. They are giving all the data to us. So we know exactly their carbon foot-print and how much energy they are consuming. I think another kind of mobile banking by “Bkash” is a great initiative of CSR. It has created easy access of banking for the poor and marginalized. We soon want to become a “Green Central Bank”. We want to reduce the consumption of the conventional energy.”

**How are you looking at human rights/ customer rights issues?**

“We have developed a customer interest protection centre CIPC, as a customer if you are not well treated, if your money has been taken away without your knowledge and they can complain to us, we have a hotline 16236,
anyone can call that number and my centre will take that complain and they will pursue that whether it was a violation of regulation or not whether there was a customer dissatisfaction or not. We are regularly resolving customer complaints. Last year alone we had about 7000 complaints and we have mostly resolved more than 5000+ complaints, other are slightly long term in case of legal structure etc. Sometimes I myself have responded directly to the complaints. I feel for customer service Governor plays a critical role.”

*Are you satisfied with all the CSR activities you are doing? Where do you find challenges in implementing CSR in Bangladesh?*

“No I am not satisfied. So far this has been voluntary, some banks did and some did not do and also not all money which went for CSR maybe categorized as real CSR. This is something we need to be a bit more cautious. The CSR department has come up and they are organizing the loopholes, we hope to see a better coordination in spending to the right CSR activities.”

“What I think is that all banks and financial institutions should be asked to provide a certain percentage of their gross income to CSR initiatives. We already asked them but it is still kept voluntary, I think it is time that we make it more mandatory for banks, that certain percentage of their income, their pre-tax income should readily go for CSR activities and of that they can keep a certain percentage of the money into a pool of all the Banks together, so they can do big projects, for e.g. if they want to have a hospital for the worker or a university for the disadvantaged. So they can have a pool of resources that can link to the post-MDGs for sustainable development. This is something I envision to achieve.”

“Secondly I want as Central Bank to get involved in CSR as well, as our income is also huge, so last year I have created a fund after Rana Plaza from Central Bank alone about Tk.5 crore and this year we will put in some more fund, our part will not go to any individual beneficiary rather we want to give institutional support., for e.g. last year we gave 9 institutional support like the burn unit has received our support, another was a school of an autistic institution etc.”

*Post Rana Plaza calamity how do you think the Banking Sector can engage in preventive measures? Is it the State’s responsibility only?*

“Yes the State has its own duty, but we have given circulars to all the banks that they should not give money to anyone violating these standards, building codes and all that.. In addition we created a fund for rectification of those factories so that they become more compliant. It has a low percentage of interest rate, we give 5% rate to banks, and banks probably add couple of percentage more, but it is comparably low. At the same time we are encouraging the Government to come up with more funds for these people in the next budget.”

*So for Bangladesh how can CSR take the country forward? What are the areas you think needs improvement?*

“I think that Bangladesh given its limitation of low income is doing quite well. Particularly the banking sector is doing fantastic in terms of Socially Responsible Financing. I think one should take clues from this banking sector and spread the news to others so that other sectors also have similar kind of CSR commitments. I think our major attention should be on education. Bangladesh can only go up through quality education and also life skill development through capacity building of institutions. So these are the areas Bangladesh should really focus on.”
Mr. Shitangshu Kumar Sur Chowdhury was appointed as the Deputy Governor of Bangladesh Bank, central bank of the country on January 2012. Prior to his appointment, he has been serving in the central bank for more than thirty years. He worked and managed all clusters of central banking i.e. Banking Regulations and Supervisions, Reserve Management, Monetary Policy and operations.

Mr. Chowdhury obtained his Masters Degree in English from the University of Rajshahi, Bangladesh and MBA in Finance and Accounting. He is a diplomaed associate of Institute of Bangladesh (IBB). He stood first in the 2nd part banking diploma examination and been awarded with Bangladesh Bank gold medal.

Overview of CSR & the Banking Sector in Bangladesh

As CSR is a concept to be materialized according to the necessity of situation, there is no universally agreed statement to define itself. Yet, CSR can be viewed as-

"the voluntary actions that a corporation implements as it pursues its mission and fulfills its perceived obligations to stakeholders, including employees, communities, the environment, and society as a whole".

This definition endorses the idea of strategic corporate social responsibility. The expectations of relevant internal and external stakeholders, irrespective of where those stakeholders may be located, may have a strong influence on CSR strategy.

A strategic approach to Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) is increasingly important to the competitiveness of enterprises. It can bring benefits in terms of risk management, cost savings, access to capital, customer relationships, human resource management, and innovation capacity. It can therefore drive the development of new markets and create opportunities for growth. Responsible business conduct is especially important when private sector operators provide public services. CSR offers a set of values on which to build a more cohesive society and on which to base the transition to a sustainable economic system.

CSR in the Banking Sector in Bangladesh:

In June 2008, Bangladesh Bank issued a comprehensive circular titled ‘Mainstreaming Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) in banks and financial institutions in Bangladesh’ specifying the following priority areas:

- Self-employment credit and Small and Medium Enterprise (SME) lending programs,
- Financing programs for installation of renewable energy plant, waste recycling plant and effluent treatment plant;
- Credit programs for diversified production of crops, oilseeds, spices, vegetables, fruits etc. by rural households, financing the growers directly or through suitable intermediaries in the value chain.
- Mobile phone based/ local MFI outlet supported programs
- Financing programs supporting folk crafts, folk musical and performing arts.
In December 2010, Bangladesh Bank instructed the banks to establish separate CSR desk to pay special attention to this issue. Bangladesh Bank has published CSR review report as of April 2010, July 2011, July 2012 and August 2013.

In 2013 Bangladesh Bank integrated CSR performances of banks in the assessment process of their CAMELS rating. The groundbreaking initiative by BB in 2013 has been to launch a CSR fund named “Bangladesh Bank Disaster Management and Social Responsibility”.

**CSR Expenditure Pattern of Banks:**

In 2007, total amount put into this area by banks was BDT 226.40 Million. In 2012, the figure stood at BDT 3046.69 Million (Table-1). After the Rana Plaza Collapse, banks donated almost Tk. 1.00 billion which was coordinated by Bangladesh Bank.

The trend of CSR expenditure pattern of banks is shown below:

![CSR Expenditure Pattern of Banks](image)

**Concluding Thoughts:**

Globally, Central bank usually does not intervene in their CSR activities. But, Bangladesh Bank being the central bank has provided regulatory framework to banks for CSR activities. Poverty alleviation through minimizing income disparity is one of the top priorities for a country like Bangladesh. In that context, Bangladesh Bank devises supervisory structure in such a manner enabling banks not only to move forward for their own growth, but also to support the development initiatives of government.
Global Networking for the Community Health Workers

Background
The City Bank Limited was established in 1983 as one of the first generation banks in Bangladesh. While having roots into the past as the forerunner of privately owned banks, it has embraced the corporate culture of global best practices. The bank serves individual consumers as well as businesses through its alternate channels and business units.

Motivation
City Bank is always committed to be a part of sustainable development programs of the resources of the community where the community has been neglected. To maintain a healthy community, continuous development of the community workers and their hands on knowledge sharing session has no alternative. Associating with Partners for World Health, USA was a critical move towards such initiative.

Description
City Bank partnered with Eminence, Bangladesh and Partners for World Health (a US based not-for-profit organization) that works specifically in the area of community health. The bank sponsored the twofold program through the partnership.

Sponsorship of 1st Global Conference on Community Health 2013
The aim of this conference was to strengthen the existing Health Information Systems of communicable
diseases, chronic diseases, maternal and child health issues, nutrition. Around 200 professionals from Bangladesh and abroad attended the program and were able to create a network on sharing knowledge regarding quality, patient safety, technology and innovation, best practices on community health.

**Medical Mission Program (March 24th – 29th 2013) in Jamalpur Sadar Hospital**

This was a clinical interchange between physicians, nurses and health professionals of different countries that focused on enabling Bangladeshi physicians and nurses to improve their skill set. Medical professionals from USA with various specializations provided free services including surgery, hands on training and awareness program on patient care. The program also conducted cancer screening training sessions for nurses, provided cancer screening tests to 100 slum dwelling women.

**Impact**

The Conference created greater awareness among the Bangladeshi medical community as well as created a network of professionals exchanging experience, skills and knowledgebase. The Medical Mission conducted 25 surgeries and 250 consultations while the local community workers received hands-on training. 50 nurses were also trained on clinical cancer screening methods. The exposure has surely changed the way these people perceive community health practices and has also impacted their way of conducting their tasks and thus improved the overall community health scenario in which they work in.

**Looking Forward**

This joint initiative has created possibilities for City Bank to establish a program on “Specialized nursing training program/diploma” where a medical college of Bangladesh will be chosen as the institute. Partners for World Health, USA will provide faculty/trainers for each semester to provide world class hands-on trainings.
Providing Access to Education through Public-Private Partnership

Education is the cornerstone of Mutual Trust Bank’s (MTB) commitment to corporate citizenship. In keeping with the targets conceived in the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), MTB has given priority to primary education for improving the literacy rates among the disadvantaged sections of the population. In particular, MTB has provided scholarships to meritorious students for higher education, supported programs to promote the understanding of the English language as well as self-sustainability and skills training. In recent years Bangladesh has made significant progress to ensure children at all social levels have access to primary school. As a result, 87% of children are enrolled in primary schools. Nonetheless, much work needs to be done to curtail the high dropout rates brought on by poor quality of schools and children being pushed into employment by their families.

MTB has partnered with Management and Resources Development Initiative (MRDI), a non-profit organization working on numerous social development programs, and the local school authority in a remote “char” area of Bangladesh to rebuild a primary school that had been damaged by severe weather conditions. The project was initiated in Char Kukri Mukri, situated in the sub-district of Char Fashion in Bhola district of Bangladesh. Apart from the reconstruction of the school, the project has also funded fully refurbishing the school with proper sanitation and water facilities. Since the reconstruction, around 289 students have been enrolled with 70% comprising of female students. MRDI has been responsible for monitoring and evaluation of the project. Field visits are conducted by MRDI associates who submit reports every three months to MTB regarding specific indicators including enrolment and performance of students as well as progress reports provided to them by the school authority of the district.

Thus, by focusing on improving access to education, Mutual Trust Bank is striving towards fulfilling the commitment towards the development of the youth of Bangladesh.
Skilled Manpower Development for the RMG Sector

Case-study: IDLC Finance Ltd.

In a country burdened by overpopulation, it is nothing short of an irony that lack of skilled manpower is one of the major challenges faced by businesses and industries today. A coordinated effort from both public and private sectors is the need of the hour and is crucial to address this issue.

With this in mind, IDLC launched a project in June 2013 following the public-private partnership approach, targeting skills developed of marginal people and subsequent placement in the RMG sector as Junior Machine Operators.

Project Stakeholders

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Industry Partner and Major Sponsor</th>
<th>Fareast Knitting and Dyeing Industries Limited</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Technical Consultant</td>
<td>TVET Reform Project, ILO Bangladesh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training Partner</td>
<td>Gazipur Technical School and College (under the Directorate of Technical Education)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Partner</td>
<td>CARE Bangladesh, with support from Shiree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concept Adoption and Incubation, Partner Identification, Management, Sponsorship and Coordination among Stakeholders</td>
<td>IDLC Finance Limited</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Project Model

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phases</th>
<th>Activity Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Trainee selection</td>
<td>Trainees are sourced from the impoverished regions of North Bengal by CARE Bangladesh. Each batch has the capacity to accommodate maximum 26 (twenty-six) trainees. Female trainees are preferred in consideration of the demography of the RMG sector of Bangladesh, and to ensure larger and more active participation of women in household decision-making process and overall economic development of the region.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Initial Orientation</td>
<td>Trainees undergo a seven-day mandatory orientation program conducted by CARE Bangladesh before they are relocated to Gazipur. This orientation plays a crucial role in preparing the trainees for the socio-cultural change they would be encountering after relocation, understand their commitment level to complete training and subsequent work for Fareast, and remove any apprehension they may have regarding working in the RMG sector.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institutional Training at Gazipur</td>
<td>Following initial orientation, trainees are relocated to Gazipur to undergo a 2-month institutional training program (six hours a day; six days a week) at Gazipur Technical School and College (GTSC). Training module prepare by TVET Reform Project of ILO is followed to make them eligible as per ILO standards. The trainees receive a fixed stipend and accommodation facilities, sponsored by Fareast and IDLC, while fabric for training purposes is also provided by Fareast. During the institutional training, factory HR personnel of Fareast conduct session at GTSC to orient trainees on various issues like workplace rules and regulations, factory environment, worker rights, wage policy, health and safety standards and fire and earthquake policy etc., among others, while trainees also visit Fareast factory once every month for more practical orientation.</td>
</tr>
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</table>
On-the-job Training at Fareast

After completion of the Institutional training, trainees undergo a 1-month on-the-job (OTJ) training at Fareast factory. This training helps them familiarize with the industrial set-up; industry work pace and functioning; and collaborating with co-workers, before they are exposed to production lines.

Assessment, Certification and Recruitment

After successful completion of the OTJ training, the trainees are jointly assessed by GTSC and Fareast officials, and are provided with a training completion certificate. Concurrently, they are appointed at Fareast factory at various grades of machine operators, subject to the competence levels achieved. However, they trainees are also free to join other RMG factories as well.

Till date, the partners have successfully completed training of two batches, and 46 trainees have successfully been placed as Machine Operators at Fareast and a few other factories.

The 3rd batch is due to start from February 1, 2014.

Project Rationale

- Socio-economic transformation of the marginalized;
- Availability of skilled workers will encourage industries to relocate to other belts;
- Goodwill for the industry as well among its foreign buyers;
- Skilled workers justifying higher salary;
- Formal orientation and better awareness of factory rules and regulations;
- Higher level of commitment to their employers; and
- Joining directly as operators, instead of as helpers and working their way up;
Corporate Social Responsibility in the Health Care Sector

The health sector of Bangladesh has overcome poverty and low healthcare-spending to make significant achievements over the last four decades, said a six-part series on Bangladesh published by the internationally-reputed medical journal The Lancet. The achievements were made especially in improving the survival rate of infants and children under the age of five, bettering life expectancy, expanding immunization coverage and strengthening tuberculosis control, the series observed. Over the 40 years, Bangladesh has outperformed its Asian neighbors, convincingly defying the expert view that reducing poverty and increasing health resources are the key drivers of better population health. Bangladesh has a health system which is dominated by the public sector and the private sector is run by local entrepreneurs, different NGOs and international organizations. In public sector, The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare is the leading organization for policy formulating, planning and decision making at macro and micro level. Under the Ministry four Directorates e.g. Directorate General of Health Services, Directorate General of Family Planning, Directorate of Nursing Services and Directorate General of Drug Administration are providing health services to the citizens.
Tanvir Raquib is the Executive Director of Good HEAL Trust. Good Health, Education, and Life (HEAL) Trust is a private not-for-profit organization registered under the Trust Act of Bangladesh. It was established in 2013 with the aim of improving the quality of health care services in Bangladesh. Good HEAL Trust brings over 60 years of collective groundbreaking cross-sectoral experience among its distinguished partners and advisors who have come together to envision a bright future for Bangladesh through comprehensive, long-term solutions to some of the most pressing issues faced by the country.

Tanvir was also the founder CEO/Executive Director and Trustee of A K Khan Healthcare Trust, converted Nursing Bridge Program from being an International Placement Program to a Continuing Education Program to train the existing registered nurses of Bangladesh. He launched the cervical cancer screening and treatment program in the slums of Dhaka, and published two educational magazines on Nursing and two health awareness magazines on cancer prevention and treatment. He prepared business plans for the A K Khan Healthcare Center of Excellence (proposed), Shamshun Nahar College of Nursing (proposed) and A K Khan Ibrahim Center for Post Graduate Nursing (proposed). Also served as Program Manager of Grameen Healthcare Trust, helped prepare business plans for Grameen Al-Sabeel Hospital and Grameen Caledonian Nursing College. He is the Founder of Medipro, a turn-key based medical equipment sales and service provider in Bangladesh. Prior to his return to Bangladesh, he worked as an Applications Engineer for the PCIBus Group of Texas Instruments in Dallas, Texas.

Bridging the Nursing Gap

By Tanvir Raquib

The Nursing profession is an indispensable piece of the health system. Nurses play a vital role in the treatment and recovery of patients. As a 93% women-majority profession in a traditional society like Bangladesh where many women may not seek care for themselves or their children without access to a female health care provider, the nursing profession represents an opportunity to bridge understanding of women-specific problems and the peculiarities of their utilization patterns. At the last mile (rural areas), urban slums and factories, nurses can be employed in Telemedicine enabled clinics to offer low cost health care service.
As of January 2011, Bangladesh had 26,644 registered nurses with 17,605 posts in the public nursing services and education, of which 15,086 nurses are working in the public sector and 2,513 posts are vacant. Vacancies in public sector posts are higher among nurses of higher qualification, with 96% of class 1 (senior) posts, 68% of class II (junior) posts, and 20% of class III (aide) posts being vacant! It is estimated that around 3,000 registered nurses are employed in the private sector, and about 3000 are working abroad. A study suggests that 99% of nurses are employed in hospitals while another source suggests 95% work in urban hospitals and clinics.

Bangladesh has a population-nurse ratio of 5000:1, a bed-nurse ratio of 13:1, and a doctor-nurse ratio of 2.5:1. These fall far short of the international standard for bed-nurse ratio of 4:1 and doctor-nurse ratio of 1:3. Thus, there is acute scarcity of nurses for providing inpatient care, where inadequacy of HCPs is a strong limiting factor of population health. Also, with more physicians than nurses, the role of the nurse is very circumscribed, and doctors perform many tasks that nurses are qualified to do, either as a job preservation strategy or due to a lack of confidence in the capability of nurses.

**Bangladesh faces a shortage of 280,000 trained nurses, which is a major obstacle towards achieving its MDG targets, as well as national health goals outlined under the 2011-2016 Health, Population and Nutrition Sector Development Program (HPNSDP) and the 2008 Bangladesh Health Workforce Strategy. In other words, a tenfold increase of the current size of the nursing workforce is needed!**

Each year, public Nursing Institutes graduate 1250 nurses, while private Nursing Institutes graduate 530 nurses. This level of production is clearly inadequate to fulfill the current demand of trained nurses in Bangladesh without significantly increasing institutional capacity.

**Two year Accelerated BSc. Nursing** is a popular BSc Nursing program offered in the western countries for the people who already have a Bachelor degree in any science related field. Graduates from the non-science background can also enroll in the accelerated nursing course if they complete the necessary prerequisite courses in Biology and Organic Chemistry. Bangladesh Government and Bangladesh Nursing Council have recently approved the Two year Accelerated BSc Nursing course curriculum. By offering accelerated BSc nursing course at the 37 government nursing institutes, with a yearly intake of only 100 students into the program, Bangladesh can overnight increase the yearly net output of the new graduates from nursing institutes and college by another 4000 new nurses thus bringing the total number of new nurses entering service every year to around 6000. There are many young people in their 20s and 30s who might want to change their profession and chose nursing as their career because for a good nurse the profession is both prestigious and financially attractive. There is a huge demand for qualified nurses in Middle East, North America, Europe, Japan and Australia. USA alone needs 1.5 million new nurses. If Bangladesh can send only 200,000 nurses to these countries for an average yearly salary of USD 70,000 and if these nurses send 50% of their salary to Bangladesh, it will amount to USD 8.5 billion foreign remittance per year. Bangladesh will move from a low income country to a middle income country overnight.

Drexel University for Global Health, Bangladesh Medical Association of North America and Good HEAL Trust of Bangladesh have recently submitted a proposal to the Government of Bangladesh to assist its Nursing Institutes through capacity building and curriculum development so that the Nursing Institutes can strengthen the existing programs and offer the Two Year Accelerated Nursing Course. It is hoped that the Government of Bangladesh will implement this project soon.
Access to Essential Health Services via Telemedicine

Case-study: Good Heal Trust

In Bangladesh, the inequitable distribution of qualified medical practitioners is the most compelling reason for use of telemedicine. With 84% of doctors located in urban areas although over 75% of the population live in rural areas, the doctor-to-population ratio is 1:1,500 in urban areas and 1:15,000 in rural areas. The average number of hospital beds available per 1000 population is 0.25, which is higher in urban areas and lower in rural areas. This is the gross inequality in the distribution of healthcare services between the urban and rural areas, and consequently between the rich and the poor. It is estimated 25% of Bangladesh’s population live in the slums and the shoals and they are the most neglected.

Bringing health care service to the rural areas, slums and shoals have been a challenge for a long time. People living in these areas depend on “quacks” and they are not qualified to diagnose diseases or prescribe medicines. Deploying telemedicine and trained nurses at these areas supported by doctors from a remote hospital is the best solution for delivering healthcare service in slums, shoals, and distant and remote areas. A telemedicine network is an integrated healthcare network that uses modern telecommunication and information technologies to provide comprehensive healthcare services to a specific group. The model is also economical, cost-effective, easily scalable and sustainable.

Good HEAL Trust has established a Telemedicine Center at the Korail Slum, which is the largest slum in Dhaka city. The shanty town is home to nearly 0.15 million poor people crammed in small huts, with the poorest living conditions and severe health risks. The Trust launched the clinic in April last year in collaboration with the Diabetic Association of Bangladesh. It uses telemedicine technology to reach out to its everyday patients. Doctors at the Diabetic Association's Bangladesh Institute of Health Science help them out in conducting the telemedicine service. On enrolment for Tk 30, a patient receives a registration card using which they receive substantial discount on all tests and fees for consultation with the specialist doctors. The Trust’s trained health workers first screen the registered patient before the doctors examine them. This model ensures proper utilization of all resources and keeps the cost down.

The clinic gives slum dwellers access to health advice and easy access to treatment for all general illnesses and chronic diseases, as well as health education for disease prevention. Need-based healthcare services include antenatal and postnatal care, screening and treatment of communicable diseases, screening and treatment of non-communicable diseases such as Diabetes, Hypertension, Pulmonary and Renal diseases, Screening, Awareness and Early detection of Cervical cancer, Cervicitis, Breast Cancer and Oral Cancer. On an average the clinic provides health service to around 600 people from the slum every month.
Innovative Models to Fight Malnutrition at Scale

IMPACT AT SCALE
Driven by a vision on world without malnutrition, GAIN (Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition) fights malnutrition in Bangladesh through innovative and sustainable models that increase access to affordable nutritious foods among communities vulnerable to malnutrition. To improve dietary quality, GAIN supports a wide range of nutrition programs in areas including:

• Agriculture and nutrition
GAIN promotes the integration of agriculture and nutrition to enhance the nutritional quality of agricultural commodities and diversify diets. The organization works with private and public sector partners to identify opportunities along the agricultural value chain that improve nutrition. After a thorough research, GAIN has rolled out a pioneering pilot program on Zinc enrichment of rice at soaking stage.

• Maternal Infant and Young Child Nutrition (MIYCN)
To address the critical first 1,000 days of a child’s life, GAIN supports the distribution of multi-nutrient supplements added to daily home-made meals and promotion of breastfeeding and appropriate complementary feeding. Bangladeshi families use 05 ingredient sachets of a multi-nutrient powder called ‘Pushtikona’ - a local solution responding to local nutrition needs - as a result of significant investment from GAIN. The project builds health and nutrition capacity for community frontline health workers and increases access to better nutrition for hundreds of thousands vulnerable households across Bangladesh.

• Large Scale Food Fortification: Universal Salt Iodization and Fortification of Vegetable Oil with Vitamin A
Promoting availability of and access to adequately iodized salt and vitamin A fortified vegetable oil can improve the nutrition level of millions of vulnerable women and children. GAIN has set good models of public – private partnership in order to improve the nutrition status of the country. The government has made it mandatory to fortify all edible salt and vegetable oil through enacting laws as a means of sustainable solution to address.

• Empowering Female Garment Workers for a better nutrition
In Bangladesh, female factory workers are vulnerable to a numerous health risks and are also susceptible to anemia and other micronutrient deficiencies. Prevalence of anemia among female migrant workers in Dhaka is very high. To improve the nutritional and social status of female workers and their children, GAIN’s new program is focusing on ensuring access to nutritious foods as well as health and nutrition education and entitlements.

• Integrated School Nutrition
GAIN is supporting the pilot of innovative and pioneering community led hot cooked meal school nutrition programs. Hot cooked meals aim to increase school attendance and improve nutrition of children aged 5 to 11 years. The effort is integrated with other programs such as participation and empowerment, transparency and public accountability, de-worming, safe drinking water, sanitation and hygiene.
CROSS CUTTING PRIORITIES:

• COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT AND PARTICIPATION
In partnership with credible and leading civil society organizations, GAIN facilitates access to and control over nutrition resources by marginalized communities. GAIN empowers women’s groups and local government bodies to strengthen nutrition governance for enhanced public accountability and transparency. Integrating and addressing gender equity and diversity (GED) and enhancing social position of the marginalized have been key elements of program design and delivery.

• KNOWLEDGE ASSIMILATION AND TRANSFER
GAIN prioritizes participatory research and measurement of program impact. By improving program quality and impact; GAIN has been a partner of choice and on providing critical technical and programmatic insights to various stakeholders including government of Bangladesh. GAIN’s programs integrate capacity building and knowledge assimilation and transfer across communities.

• DEFINING APPROPRIATE POLICY AND REGULATORY ENVIRONMENTS
GAIN is working with the Government of Bangladesh and civil society organizations to set evidence-based, pro-poor policy and regulatory environments for improved nutrition in compliance with the most up-to-date international standards. GAIN’s representation and participation has been enhanced in key policy and advisory bodies including National Steering Committee on Nutrition. GAIN has successfully engaged in key national policy and legislations like; “Fortification of Edible Oil with vitamin A”, “National Micronutrient Deficiency Control Strategy and “National School Feeding and Nutrition Policy”.
Case-study: Square Pharmaceuticals Ltd.

**Operating 24/7 Free Helpline for Mother and Babies**

Supermom is a free telephone (0961 2222 333) service and a full-fledged interactive Bengali website (www.supermombd.com) for mothers and their babies. Square Pharmaceuticals Ltd believes that every mother is a Supermom. Saluting these Supermoms, to make their life a little easy, Square operates this service, to help mothers to be the finest mom. Supermom was first launched in 2009, with an aim to provide the best possible solutions to the most confusing situations of new mothers. It offers mothers everything they need to know for their baby at every stage. Giving suggestions for any sort of health problems or queries such as common cold, productive cough, high fever, constipation, dry skin problem, slow growth rate etc. Teamed up with experts and professionals, this praiseworthy initiative by Meril Baby from Square Toiletries Ltd is there to keep a mother and the baby protected, healthy and safe!

Starting from pregnancy planning, taking care during pregnancy and growing up information for babies all are available in the service, absolutely free. In a forum, all the moms can interact with one another, share information and experiences, get tips from the experts and learn about the suitable high-quality products for their babies. This initiative was developed to create a better interactive platform and to form a “Conscious Mothers’ Community”. In short, Supermom is the hub for all information that could make every mom an extraordinary Supermom!
Corporate Social Responsibility in the Agricultural Sector

The economy of Bangladesh is predominantly agricultural. Since the birth of Bangladesh, the country has achieved an incredible growth in food production and reached towards self-sufficiency by the 90s. About 80 percent of the total population lives in rural areas, and 62 percent of them are directly, and others are indirectly engaged in a wide range of agricultural activities. The agricultural sector contributes around 20 percent of the country’s Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and generates employment for 48 percent of the total labor force. The general agricultural sectors are Rice crops, Jute, Cotton, Sugarcane, Flower, Sericulture, Horticulture, Fisheries, Vegetables, Livestock, Soil Development, Seed development and distribution. Nuclear Agriculture has brought a new dynamic change in the agricultural sectors of Bangladesh.

While on the other hand, the processed food industry in Bangladesh represents one of the major potential sectors in terms of its contribution to value addition and employment. The sector accounts for over 22% of all manufacturing production and employs about 20% of labor forces. The food processing industry in the country is heterogeneous in nature displaying greater diversity in size, technology, quality of products, processing, preserving, and marketing and distributions systems. The sector is primarily dominated by small and medium enterprises with its strong linkage to the local production and high potential for processing, value addition and export.
Nasreen Fatema Awal is one of the founding Directors and key personalities of the Multimode Group. She is directly involved in the Business for the past 14 years. Apart from her business establishment, she is also the Founder President of Women Entrepreneur Association of Bangladesh (WEAB) and organized this first women centered trade association in 2000. She has also been actively associated with the Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce & Industry, SAARC Chamber Women Entrepreneurs Council, Dhaka American Women’s Club and United Nations Women’s Club.

Women in Agriculture

By Nasreen Fatema Awal

In the rural economy of Bangladesh which centers on agriculture and industry, the contribution of women is more than that of men. Recently in a survey conducted by a Study Group INCIDIN Bangladesh it has been found that the contribution in the rural economy by women is about 53% while male contribution 47%. Although women are making substantial contribution in the rural economy but it has not been recognized by the male dominated society. Rather they are suppressed by the double standard of the society and they cannot enjoy the fruits of their contribution to the economy.

Women’s participation in pre-modern agriculture was predicted by family or kinship status and male domination. In the nineteen seventies, after the establishment of independent Bangladesh an elaborate assistance program to augment the income of impoverished peasantry by giving in cash or kind specially to farmers’ wives young goats, chicks, ducklings and vegetable seeds for homestead husbandry and kitchen gardening.

In the nineteen eighties, the Grameen Bank started its operations specially forming groups of women borrowers and granting group loans for various kinds of husbandry produces and by-products.

From 1999 to 2006, participation by men in the agriculture laborers increased by 103 percent to 7.7 million. As men move from farming to the service industry and other non-agriculture sectors, women are gaining more acceptance as paid farm managers and post harvest processors. But there is no initiative for legitimate social balancing and compensation for woeful paucity of female ownership of land (305% in 1993 FAO report, now reduced to 2%) that could provide commensurate security for women in agriculture.
Kazi Shahid Foundation (KSF) was started as a dairy cooperative to support the country's first and so far only organic tea garden, Kazi and Kazi Tea Estate Ltd (KKTE). Located in the very northern tip of the country, KKTE was founded by the Gemcon Group, in 2000, with the goal of improving lives in this remote and neglected region through enterprise development. Gemcon first came to the district in the mid-80s with an innovative engineering concern to aid rural electrification.

KKTE itself was a visionary project. The first tea garden in northern Bangladesh! The first organic tea garden and also the only one, to be internationally certified. KKTE employs organic methods that go well beyond mere certification requirements. This calls for huge quantities of bio-fertilizers for which cow-dung is a key ingredient. As the garden expanded, and its need for cow-dung exceeded the capacity of its own dairy, the garden adopted a most innovative solution: giving cows to neighboring women, who pay off the price in installments, through highly feasible daily quota of milk and cow dung instead of cash. Rural people, especially women, are encouraged to do contract dairy farming which improves their economic status as well as social status. There are about 1060 members in the Contractual Dairy Farming program. Two of these branches are now funded by PKSF’s LIFT project –expected to be expanded later. Moreover, the beneficiaries have extended their activities to backward integration by growing improved quality grass for their cows. They are continuously given training and other support.

The ownership of the cow, and any calves it breeds, are fully transferred to the women. This innovative formula has not only ensured steady supply of manure for a garden now approaching thousand acres, but also brought around phenomenal transformation to the lives of the KSF women. KSF is fulfilling the mission of improving the lives of its neighbors more deeply than even could be imagined possible at the time of the cooperative’s founding.

In addition to radically increasing the women’s income and assets, KSF also facilitates an organic tea cooperative, organic vegetable farming and supply, bio-fertilizer production and education programs. It has now expanded to two new districts: Sirajganj and Savar. It believes in steady and sustainable growth, guided by the value: we grow only in harmony with nature and society.
Champion’s March: An inspiration to organic living

“I think organic tea is the most profitable harvest among all crops, once it is ready to harvest and market” this is how Kazi Aminur, a 48 years old organic tea farmer living in Tetulia, Panchagarh, values organic tea farming. Kazi Aminur is with KSF since 2007 and he is from Mahananda group of Darjipara branch. He is now cultivating organic tea in 4 acres of land.

KSF assisted Aminur all the way from land preparation for tea cultivation to market linkage of green leaf including labor wages for sowing seedlings, organic fertilizer, shade tree, pest control techniques and all sorts support. In primary stage he received regular trainings on organic tea cultivation (2 -3 times a year) from KSF. First three to four years of tea farming was very hard for him as he had to spend a lot of his time, resource and labor to nurture tea cultivation. It was quite difficult for him to comply with follow all the details of organic farming. All his hard work has paid him off. He has been awarded with training certification from Lacon, an International certifying agency. At present Aminur’s monthly income from tea exceeds Tk.50,000 which has made him confident enough to further his tea farming. He would like to cultivate tea in all in of his 20 bighas land in near future. Kazi Aminur is an ideal example of organic tea cultivator and an inspiration for the growing number organic tea farmers of Panchagarh district. “It’s pity that so many youths end up as unemployed after spending valuable resources in various higher degrees. Instead if they join rural entrepreneurship as offered by KSF not only their future would be brighter and strengthened the economic landscape of the nation would be changed as well” says the agri-preneur towards the youth of the country.
Of inspirations and the need to succeed

Dairy Farming of KSF does have a literal influence in uplifting a beneficiary’s lifestyle which is clearly visible in the story of Siddika Begum. Despite a small family, Siddika had to look for additional income as her husband did not earn enough and her son was suffering from some physical disabilities. Siddika started thinking about rearing cows but could not afford it. To manage the money, she was registered as a member of Padma Organic women cooperative group on 8th May, 2010. Afterwards, she was able to buy a cow worth of TK 25000/ from the KSF project of dairy farming. Siddika paid off half of the installments with milk and cow dung and other half with weekly repayment of cash within a year. Now she has both cow and calf whose present market value is TK 35000. Siddika did not need to buy milk for her family as she got milk from her own cow last year. Definitely, this saves her cost of milk and also creates a way to earn some money. Last year, she was able to make an inspiring amount of earnings of TK 11000. Siddika thinks that dairy farming is a profitable business and affirms to expand her herd with more cows. She is hoping for a better livelihood and this dream will come true because she has relentless energy and thirst for success.

A surging change

Shahar Banu is seen as a pioneer in Shahebijot village of Tetulia, Panchagar. Being one of the first women to start dairy farming for milk production independently, she is now the leading dairy producer in her village. Three years ago, KSF offered Shahar Banu a high yielding cattle variety along with technical support in feed, vaccine and livestock management. She has since doubled her stock from 4 to 8 cattle and was able to sell milk and dung to KSF. Shahar Banu now helps many other women cattle farmers adopt high yielding variety for improved sustainability. Given her good reputation, the villagers easily accept her advice. A large number of women adopted cattle rearing and drastically increased their income. “I invested my extra earnings from dairy cattle rearing into better food, schooling and health care for my two children,” Shahar Banu says, when asked how the project has helped her. She points to the healthy cattle in the cow-shed. According to Shahar Banu “The improved quality of cattle and scientific rearing methods including feed and disease management increased the quantity of milk and the price of cow as well.” “My higher income meant I could save up and built a new house for my family,” Shahar Banu says proudly standing by her children in front of their new house. “This has changed my status in the village. Here housing is normally the responsibility of men. Now the community can see how women can provide for their families too,” she says. The enthusiasm of her peers to get new high yielding variety cow makes her happier then before, as she can see the sea of changes going to happen in their lives.
With the world’s population expected to grow by 30% to 9 billion by 2050, the demands on agriculture will continue to grow. Agriculture occupies one-third of the land surface of the earth and is at the nexus of climate change, food and energy security, sustainable livelihoods, economic development and human rights. Business has a critical role to play in delivering practical, effective and scalable solutions to meet the global challenges of food security and sustainable agriculture.

While considerable progress has been made by the private sector to date – through mechanisms such as the Sustainable Agriculture Initiative and commodity roundtables, Governments continue to face challenges in aligning their agricultural, resource, export and import management policies with the sustainable development agenda.

To advance the positive impact that business can have in this space, the UN Global Compact is facilitating the development of voluntary Food and Agriculture Business Principles (FABP) which was earlier named as SABP-Sustainable Agricultural Business Principle, in collaboration with key civil society organizations and experts. The FAB Principles will:

- Articulate a common understanding and agreement on the resources, ecosystem services and socio-economic impacts needed to build resilience into agricultural supply systems and the markets that they serve.
- Support the objectives of relevant UN agencies by offering a basis for responsible businesses to align to the goals of the UN as articulated in the Rio+20 outcome document The Future We Want; and
- Provide a framework for furthering good practices, and for developing effective private and public sector policies and partnerships.

The development of the FAB Principles is proposed in response to the need for a common understanding between existing standards and industry initiatives. Today global thinking on what constitutes sustainable agriculture remains fragmented. Existing schemes, including certification standards, are not designed to address global agricultural challenges in a holistic fashion and often are not inclusive of the majority of the world’s small farmers. By defining broadly accepted business principles and building upon progress made, the FAB Principles are aimed at filling gaps between crop-specific initiatives developed and led by industry and government.

Why Business Principle for Food & Agriculture?

UN Global Compact is facilitating the creation of Sustainable Agriculture Business Principles (SABPs) to provide a framework for ‘principle-based partnerships’ and to echo ‘sustainable intensification’ as articulated in Rio+20’s outcome document The Future We Want.
The FAB Principles

Aim for Food Security, Health and Nutrition
Businesses should build, support and operate agriculture systems that provide enough food and proper nutrition for every person on the planet.

Be Environmentally Responsible
Businesses should build, support and operate agriculture systems that deliver sustainable intensification to meet global needs, while ensuring environmental protection, restoration and enhancement and improved resource efficiency.

Ensure Economic Viability and Share Value
Businesses should ensure that agriculture systems are economically viable and share value across the entire value chain from farmers to consumers.

Respect Human Rights, Create Decent Work and Help Rural Communities to Thrive
Businesses should improve the lives of workers and farmers, respect the rights of all people, and provide equal opportunities that result in communities that are attractive to work, live and invest in.

Encourage Good Governance and Accountability
Businesses should avoid corruption, respect the law, recognize natural resource and land rights and use and be transparent regarding their activities.

Promote Access and Transfer of Knowledge, Skills and Technology
Businesses should promote access to information, knowledge and skills, adopt effective approaches and invest in new technologies for better agricultural systems.

*Draft of FABP as in 2014

The UN Global Compact is facilitating the development of the voluntary Food and Agriculture Business Principles (FAB Principles) by companies who are Global Compact signatories. The Global Compact has invited its Local Networks to convene consultation processes where the Global Compact signatories will get the opportunity to contribute their feedback and be a part of the development of the Food and Agriculture Business Principles (FAB Principles). In this process the CSR Centre (UNGC LN Bangladesh Focal Point) with support of the United Nations Global Compact (UNGC) New York office jointly organized “FABP (Food & Agriculture Business Principle) Consultation for Bangladesh in March, this year. Dr. Puvan Selvanathan, Special Advisor of the Sustainable Agriculture UN Global Compact facilitated the Consultation, where various feedback was taken from a multi-stakeholder group to incorporate the issues into the FAB Principles.
An Interview with Dr. Puvan Selvanathan by the CSR Centre

Can you tell us the background on which the FABP was initiated by UNGC office and your role?

“When I joined the UNGC, I had been involved before in the RSPO (Roundtable in the Sustainable Palm Oil) and I was the Representative for the Malaysian Palm Oil Association.”

“Well I started thinking, I suppose at the RSPO, which would be the year before Rio+ 20, so it was in year 2011. At that point in time we were looking at where could it be reliably housed, and the Global Compact was of course something I had experienced with any way in Malaysia, so it was natural and obvious that it should be the Global Compact that leads it and also the Global Compact already has a thousands of food and agro companies in it, So you don’t have to sell the basic idea, which is of the 10 UNGC Principles. These companies are already subscribed into the 10 Principles of UNGC and all you are doing is rationalizing what those 10 Principles into their supply chains. So theoretically, there should be at least a thousand companies that would immediately say, “sure that makes sense”. And that’s what we actually found. You should then be able to find other companies that are related to those thousand companies that can say, that we may not have been able to understand the 10 Principles before, but now this makes it clear for us. And so now you can see gravitation towards the Compact, So the FABPs should reinforce the 10 UNGC Principles. I mean they are together, they are not new sets of principles but they are exactly the same thing.”

“Although I did not have any agricultural background but the idea of certification as being equivalent to sustainability was certainly a new concept and a challenge since all products are not certified.”
“So how do you initiate a framework that people can subscribe to, that the whole industry can subscribe to, into which certification can become a component? The ability for any agricultural company to simply say I want to do the right thing! But how?”

“The Global Compact office is the perfect positioning where the UN stands on Sustainability in Agriculture. This would be the way to address systematically the challenges faced in the agro sector and include businesses because all agricultural systems are inclusive of businesses any way. So you think of it as a as a public sector position but actually the implementation, the distribution and all of those components are all private sector.”

“This is where the UNGC Principles and FABP come in and governments and businesses are tabled together. It cannot be expected that the private sector will think like the public sector, but together both parties can create impact. So that is how FABP came about.”

“. So this exercise was primarily to demonstrate to other stakeholders that businesses want the same thing that the development agencies want, that the government wants. As stakeholders there must be a common interest, concern with set targets and outcomes.”

“If businesses are there you can have a catalyst effect, so principles give you the basic backbone of the discussion and then you begin the discussion in a particular geographical context, in a particular supply-chain, in a particular community.”

**So since 2011 in what ways has the UN been promoting the agenda of Sustainable Agriculture?**

“Well since RIO+ 20 we explored where we needed to be, whether there was a need for such Principles and we received a positive response. A number of core advisory group meetings in close succession were held, the purpose of those meetings was not to re-discuss everything which pervades the issue, for e.g. we know there are issues with small holder farmers, we know there are other issues. So all we needed to do is clarify what are these issues. How do these issues link into the discourse on sustainable agriculture?”

“So the concepts of how trade and agriculture and small holdings work, these are all intertwined, this is what needs to be discussed and established, from the business perspective. We spent the first chunk of our time doing it. These led to a “White Paper” which is the crystallization of the thinking on these issues by business. This White paper was what we wanted to engage business to do.
The Paper was really structured to say that there are so many things in flux, there are so many variables out there, at least from the business side we just want to pin this out, so you don’t have to second guess what the business is thinking when they talk about sustainable agriculture and that was the nature of the White Paper. This then manifested itself into the Principles within the space of one year.”

**Which Local UNGC Network is taking the White Paper forward?**

“We didn’t encourage anyone to take it forward but since the draft Principles were issued in December 2013. So the draft principles were drafted based on the feed of the white Paper. The principles were blocks of outcomes, so there was a framework for what environmental responsibility means. Then those frames were refined through feedback.”

**How many Local Networks have you tapped on for the consultations?**

“All together when we finish we will have 22 local Networks and we should have had somewhere between 800 - 1000 respondents or participants in the consultation process.”

**What would you say when you are defining the impacts that these 6 Principles intend to create at the country level? What would be the 3 priority impacts?**

“Well from a UN perspective, if we look at a notion of such as a food security, food security is a difficult concept if you consider it purely on sovereign nation level, because obviously not every country can produce everything that it needs in order to be secure. It is simply not possible! And in reality why should it be necessarily so? Because we have got very intricate complex systems of trade and culture, that naturally barter and move goods in a particular way. That has been going on for thousands of years, we don’t need to suddenly say that every country has to be self-sufficient. So really, when we talk about food security we are talking about how countries can be secure in their whole system of imports-exports coupled with whatever is that they are growing domestically, coupled with their consumption patterns, so it is their whole package of influences on what they think they need to feel secure, so therefore it is not a nations or a sovereign nation issue, it’s a UN issue - it’s a global issue. Maybe the UN would be considering might a regional response. For e.g. The ASEAN programme is a good programme as an example because if you take ASEAN, you have from Singapore to Cambodia. Where Singapore which has land constraint, very high worth, already on to the other concepts of
so there is a huge spread simply within these ten countries. If food security like quality of life, impact by the haze, all of the necessities in life for its citizens. As opposed to the other end Cambodia is for e.g. still on the subsistence line where agriculture is almost 70% of the GDP, you can get that regional mix to work so that all ten countries are food secure, and technically it is completely possible that they are food secure within themselves. Then you have had some success. For this to occur partnerships need to be in place, agreements in place, you have got companies that maybe listed in Singapore but operates entirely in Indonesia which could also be a case. And these companies are all contributing to your food security. So we are looking for a sort of cooperative environment in order to create food and agriculture security!

Where do you see the FABP within five years from now?

“I see the FABPs completely mainstreamed. I don’t see anything radical or new in the FABP. What the FABP offer is a way to begin a conversation. What we should be looking at in five years time is a company or a group of actors coming back to report to say if the FAB Principles are these and we all accepted these five years ago, we as companies, you as government, as development have agreed that our outcome must be economic viability and shared value. We set the KPIs in three years time is 15%, in five years time 30% etc. but in five years time you want to come back and just check the KPI against the outcomes, so you use the Principle as a target and whatever indicators of success you want to have against that targets, and that’s why the meeting that we held in New York on reporting because if we take the ASEAN plan, the ASEAN plan has taken some action plans. While launching the ASEAN plan companies will have already committed to certain KPIs which has been already included into the FABPs.”

Do you think regular reporting is required similar to COPs of the UNGC?

Absolutely Well if you are a food and agricultural company you should be able to use the FABP to do the COP, so basically food and agriculture companies will use the FAB Principles to do their COP. As it covers all the other issues of the UNGC Principles.”
If we want to see sustainable development in Bangladesh, it is necessary for the private sector to play a large role in poverty eradication. However, such inclusive business models are rare to come by in Bangladesh. Those few that have emerged as success stories need to be highlighted, both to demonstrate the great potential in such win-win arrangements and also to inspire others in the Bangladeshi private sector to take account of the necessary sense of responsibility that needs to emerge if truly Bangladesh is to be a nation devoid of poverty by 2021 as the vision of the Head of State.
Private sector engagement in Education for Youth Empowerment (EYE) Programme

Child laborers are intrinsically linked to corporations and Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) provides a framework through which EYE can engage meaningfully with the corporate sector. In the context of EYE, CSR is an efficient tool to make corporations participate and contribute to the child rights agenda by combating the most harmful child labor practices. EYE has established intelligent partnerships between corporations and training partners (skills providers), where each group can benefit from the best practices, competencies and knowhow of the other. The goal of the intelligent partnerships is to identify common problems, solutions and benefits for all involved in order to ensure sustainability. The private companies help improve technical training, and provide young workers with apprenticeship and gainful jobs. EYE Program staff provide capacity support to the companies’ mid-level management, sharing how the companies can participate and contribute to combat harmful child work. By supporting vocational training and through learning about existing labor laws, employers take responsibility for gradually transforming harmful child labor into work that is acceptable for children.

The model of cooperation with the private sector favors both the corporations and the children they employ in this way:

- Companies increase their competitive advantage through access to skilled labor through apprenticeships and job placements.
- Trainees receive high-quality market relevant vocational training and job experience through apprenticeships. After the apprenticeship period, more than 70% of the trainees are able to secure decent jobs in the formal private sector within six months.
- Corporations add value to their brands by ensuring that their suppliers live up to international child rights standards set out in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and to the ILO conventions on minimum age and elimination of Worst Forms of Work.

The picture below shows how corporate engagement works in EYE Programme:
NGO-Private Sector Collaboration Proves Effective for DBL Group

A robust relationship between private sectors and NGOs plays a pivotal role to maximize the benefits of innovative collaboration. NGOs have increasingly become a visible contributor in the global business and developmental projects. Similarly, private sector is a key player in driving the national economy and social development. Corporations have a “duty” to be socially responsible, and can benefit by carrying out business in a responsible way, while contributing to its communities and wider society. In order to translate such elaborate plans into actions through CSR for sustainable development, DBL Group prefers partnership with development organizations.

DBL Group engages with civil society partners around social issues like women empowerment and awareness on AIDS, where effective remediation requires sophisticated approaches. For instance, the Global Women’s Economic Empowerment Initiative (GWEEI) program, funded by Walmart Foundation, aims at creating an enabling environment in which women attain their full potential, positively contributing to their careers and personal lives. The project was initiated in June 2012, in partnership with CARE Bangladesh. The program offers two trainings- the Foundation Training for both male and female workers, and the Advanced Training, targeting only the female workers. 1,432 workers participated in the Foundation Training, including 120 female workers, selected for the Advanced Training in accordance with CARE’s requirements. 32 participants have already completed this training, while 28 have completed the literacy training.

After the successful completion of Cleaner Production (CP), DBL Group is now involved in the second phase- Partnership for Cleaner Textile (PaCT), both initiated by (IFC), in partnership with Solidaridad Network. Major objective of both the programs focuses on energy and water efficiency.

The Group is also associated with Sustainable Action and Vision for a better Environment (SAVE), co-financed by DEG, PUMA and H&M, and facilitated by ASSIST. The goal is to reduce its energy, water, waste and greenhouse gas emissions by 25% by 2015 as compared to the 2011 year baseline.

Being committed to its social and environmental responsibilities, the company welcomes extensive collaborations with NGOs, as it strongly feels that associations with such global and local civil society organizations are indispensible for sustainable development.

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Report on CSR in Bangladesh 2014
"Zahidul Hassan has more than fifteen years of professional experience in the field of resource mobilization, partnerships, communications, HR, CSR and risk reduction. He has worked for Nestle, ActionAid, Sight Savers’ International in key positions. Zahidul Hassan has been working for UNICEF since 2006."

**De-risking business investment through NGO and private sector collaboration**

*By Zahidul Hassan*

Environment friendly, socially acceptable and sustainable economic growth and overall development could be termed as sustainable development which has been defined in many definitions by good number of scholars and thinkers around the globe; however, one very easily understood definition may have been mentioned in Our Common Future (the Brundtland Report):

*Sustainable development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.*

Businesses can reduce its risk to a great extent by integrating social dimension into its operation. There is now an increasing demand to integrate risk management plan or business continuity plan into the business operations. However, many experts think that social dimension is currently missing from the business blueprint which could make a business greatly sustainable in many ways if this aspect is considered and strategically and systematically integrated into the business plan and operation from the very beginning. This could be called business risk reduction (BRR) plan which could also take care of elements of disaster risk reduction (DRR).

In this regard NGO and private sector collaboration can play a vital role by complementing experiences from their respective ends and make the society more productive, resilient, stable and prosperous by implementing such models in partnerships. Particularly in Bangladesh’s context this idea is more relevant as 40 per cent of Bangladesh’s population is children and Bangladesh has a growing private sector. An ever increasing segment of our people is living in urban slums or low income communities and engaging in various economic activities. This means that many young unskilled workforce will be growing in urban slums and will be in need of employment or gainful engagement. Otherwise they will be burden and liability for the
They need to be supported and developed in a systematic manner to improve their productivity and make our society less chaotic and more stable and prosperous. By including social dimension private sector can effectively support a highly vulnerable group and make them confident and productive as well as create an ecosystem which will nurture and protect their business favorably in the long run. All parts of our society need to collaborate not confront and create a wholesome and a growing fruit of prosperity which would be healthy and sustainable economically, socially, environmentally and culturally.

CSR funds could be diverted to such social partnerships but in the DNA of business the above-mentioned social dimension needs to be built in the first place and only then it could be integral part of any business operation and lead to partnership and collaboration with community groups and organizations engaged in social development and community empowerment.

Relevant national and international laws, conventions and guiding principles on human rights and business, social and environmental issues should also be taken into considerations while developing and integrating social elements into a business strategy so that they are of international standard and address many issues which businesses need to conform as part of their compliance and regulatory affairs. Thus we can create a win-win situation for businesses, community who need support and also for non-governmental organizations that need funds to run their programmes. Most importantly such partnerships and collaborations will create good synergies among key actors of our socio economic scenario and complement each other from their areas of strength and eventually can contribute to society’s growth while keeping them sustainable.

[This article reflects writer’s own opinion and reading about the issue and in no way represent any organizational view or stand]
SANSAR is a network born out of the need to improve the sustainability development initiatives, in the South Asian Countries. The network was formed in 2011 in Dhaka and enables connectivity and networking at varied levels and sectors, bringing together stakeholders across the segments to a platform of sharing, understanding each other’s positions and working together to safeguard producers interests by improving product quality, market access and income distribution.

**Vision:** A world in which Sustainable and Responsible Business in the norm.

**Mission:** To promote the understanding and practice of the Economic, Social and Environmental Responsibilities of Business.

Focus Areas: SANSAR’s core strategy is to make stakeholders redefine and commonly understand the concept of CSR and promote it actively to address social, environmental and business related issues across the globe. SANSAR’s strategy to achieve this through:
- Policy Outreach
- Capacity Building
- Research
- Networking

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**SANSAR Countries**
Criteria for Membership

- Must be an organization registered in the country of operation.
- Should include sustainable development, environment protection, poverty alleviation or human rights, as one of its important objectives.
- Must have a proven track record of addressing issues relevant to one or more value areas of SANSAR.
- Willingness and ability to contribute to the work of the network.
- Must agree to follow the obligations of membership including contributing to the development and implementation of project activities as well as sharing expertise and experience with other members of the network.
- Should be willing to support the sustainability of the network.

National Chapter of SANSAR:

With an objective to take responsibility for activities at the national level, SANSAR has decided to initiate national chapters in all founding countries.

CSR Centre has launched the Bangladesh Local Chapter in June 2013. Under this 18 organizations have signed up as signatories to the Local Network.

Members of SANSAR

CSR Centre, Bangladesh: Promotes awareness on CSR and sustainable development through responsible business practices. It has wide access to business across sectors as well as strong links with government ministries. The Centre undertakes research and studies on CSR positioning and sustainability in different sectors.

Sustainability Development Policy Institute (SDPI), Pakistan: Conducts policy oriented research and advocacy, promotes implementation of policies based on sustainable development and facilitates civil society and government interaction through collaboration with other organizations and networks.

Prakruthi, India: This organization’s core strength is its work on the ground in India. Its activities support more than 50,000 families of rural and urban poor in various sectors such as tea, coffee, sugarcane, cotton and garments, linking CSR agendas of companies to address poverty issues and sustainable development.

The Center for Afghan Civil Society Support (CACSS), Afghanistan: The activities are concerned with the strengthening of Afghan Civil Society and to improve the quality of life for all Afghan citizens. CACSS has been working for the civil society of Afghanistan mainly in the field of Democracy and Civil Society, Local governance, Health, Law and Human Rights, Security and Peace etc.

Environmental Camps for Conservation Awareness (ECCA), Nepal: ECCA has been a leading organization in the sector of social mobilization and community development. It implements various programs to raise the quality of life through wise-use of available local resources and application of alternate and renewable technologies. Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) is one of the approaches for ECCA to explore the private sector world for partnership.
CSR CENTRE
AT A GLANCE

Report on CSR in Bangladesh 2014
Chairman’s Message

I congratulate the CSR Centre for publishing its annual CSR report entitled “Report on CSR in Bangladesh 2014: Sustainability for a Better Future”.

The CSR Centre’s journey within the last six years has been instrumental in developing Bangladesh’s Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) discussions. Within this time period the Centre is well known at national, regional and global levels. It has been engaged in CSR awareness raising and capacity building initiatives for both the corporate sector as well the development sector of Bangladesh. It is recognized as the central hub for all CSR approaches linked to the largest CSR global platform – the United Nations Global Compact (UNGC).

By engaging in good CSR practices entities can contribute and supplement the country’s development efforts. Through promoting good business norms the CSR Centre acts as a facilitator to sustainable development and is working towards creating a positive branding for Bangladesh!

Farooq Sobhan
Chairman of the Board of Trustees
CSR Centre
Over the last couple of years there has been a remarkable emphasis in Bangladesh on the issues of “Corporate Social Responsibility” or what is better known as ‘CSR’. Last year’s tragedy in the RMG sector in Bangladesh created a wave of negativity worldwide from the man made Rana Plaza episode. This sort of incident can only be avoided and finally eliminated when all stakeholders have sound knowledge on legal framework and compliance, risk strategy and strong and effective monitoring and accountability systems. Yet CSR goes beyond this. It is a well known fact that developing countries in Asia and Africa still have challenges to face when it comes to labour standards, human rights and preserving the environment.

In this context it is the appropriate time for Bangladesh to embark on National CSR policies or guidelines. This will assist companies and organizations in Bangladesh to undertake strategic CSR initiatives which will support national development plans of GOB. We are happy to announce that CSR Centre is developing the “National CSR Guideline for Bangladesh” as well as the “National CSR Policy for Children” under relevant Ministries of the Government of Bangladesh with the support of development partners.

We hope through the “Report on CSR in Bangladesh 2014: Sustainability for a Better Future” will be a first step towards knowledge sharing on good CSR approaches in Bangladesh in order to enhance a positive branding of the country.

Shahamin S. Zaman
CEO
CSR Centre, Bangladesh
About the CSR Centre

CSR Centre is an independent, non-profit Trust that promotes sustainable development through responsible business practices. Here at the Centre, CSR is viewed as a universal business strategic imperative that can be "localized" to suit an organization’s core vision and mission. The Centre provides CSR services and consultancy as well as advisory services. The primary objective of the Centre is to become the prime source of information, resources and advisory services on CSR in Bangladesh, and the operational principle is to contribute to achieving the human development targets set out in the post Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in Bangladesh through private sector led growth.

CSR Centre was established in September 5, 2007, with private sector start-up funding to encourage and expand CSR practices in Bangladesh. CSR Centre is the focal point for the United Nations Global Compact (UNGC) in Bangladesh and is the principle promoter of UNGC in Bangladesh. CSR Centre is also the founder member of SANSAR (South Asian Network on Sustainability and Responsibility), which is a regional network working collaboratively for long term development of economy at a national level.

Vision
To be the source of CSR resources for companies seeking to engage in CSR activities or further define their current activities into a concise framework. These activities are also key strategies for corporate excellence in order to maximize stakeholders benefit.

Mission
To be recognized as the centre of expertise for CSR in Bangladesh by sharing knowledge and providing expertise and services to promote sustainable development through responsible business practices.

Key Activities and Services
- Advice companies on CSR strategy development, partnerships and project management-the Centre assists companies through in-depth consultation with various members of management, to develop a concise roadmap for sustainable contributions.
- Participate in forums to engage stakeholders to advocate responsible business- the Centre already engages in various seminars and workshops.
- Promote UNGC membership and provide advisory services to members.
- Provide training and facilitate workshops on topics of CSR to build private sector capacity.

“CSR is about achieving organizational excellence in ways that honor ethical values and respect people, communities and the natural environment.”
CSR Centre

QUOTES: BOARD MEMBER

Farooq Sobhan  
President and CEO  
Bangladesh Enterprise Institute (BE)

“CSR is about going beyond compliance and incorporating good governance measures so that an organization or company is responsible and accountable to its stakeholders.”

K. M. Rezaul Hasanat  
Chairman  
Viyellatex Group

“Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) isn’t just a specific program, it’s what we do every day, maximizing positive impact while minimizing negative impact in Society.”

Vivek Sood  
CEO  
Grameenphone Limited

“Our CSR initiatives are designed to empower the Bangladeshi society by creating a lasting positive impact on the people of this country. We have facilitated community empowerment.

Shaheen Anam  
Executive Director  
Manusher Jonno Foundation

“To me CSR is about taking a portion of the profit that the corporate sector makes and giving it for any social development work that will bring about changes in the lives of the most vulnerable and marginalized people. It is also about giving back to society in appreciation for everything that the privileged classes have received from it.”

Mr. ASM Mainuddin Monem  
Deputy Managing Director  
Abdul Monem Limited

“Abdul Monem Limited is a firm believer of community development. We believe citizenship contribution to our communities and nation is vital. We know that the profitable growth of our company depends on the economic, environmental, and social sustainability of our communities. And we know it is in our best interests to contribute to the sustainability of those communities.”

Mirza Salman Ispahani  
Managing Director  
Ispahani Group of Companies

“Corporate and Social responsibility form a large part of the Ispahani philosophy. Throughout our history we have endeavored to support and advance worthwhile causes. Goodness is the only investment that never fails.”
Jahangir Saadat  
President  
Youngone Corporation  
“CSR has become an important agenda for private sector development showcasing responsible business and commitment to national development agendas. It is the need of time to brand Bangladesh better in the international arena. Business should be in harmony with nature. It should protect and respect, people and planet to earn responsible profit.”

Sohail Reza Khaled Hussain  
MD & Chief Executive Officer  
The City Bank Limited  
“CSR safeguards the trade-off between economic and social goals of the country. Our CSR initiatives not only make sure that our pledge towards the community is put into action but also work as enablers for other businesses who form part of that same community.”

Dr. A Atiq Rahman  
Executive Director  
Bangladesh Centre for Advanced Studies (BCAS)  
“Bangladesh as a rapidly developing country with a high population and rampant poverty needs to progress towards sustainable development. This implies rapid economic growth which is environmentally sound & socially just. The corporate sector has an important role to play in this area. CSR is excellent modality to enable corporate sector to contribute toward sustainable development. Bangladesh Private sector is matured enough to take this responsibility”

Syed Mahbubur Rahman  
Managing Director  
BRAC Bank Limited  
“Social responsibility is embedded in the DNA of our business at BRACBank as part of our 3P philosophy — People, Planet and Profit. Besides its core business, BRAC Bank also runs an extensive CSR Program. We prioritize on long term programs rather than short term ones for lasting and sustainable impact on people and society.”

Dr. Ananya Raihan  
Executive Director  
D.Net (Development Research Network)  
“Environmentally and socially responsible businesses are closely related to corporate governance which in turn concentrates in providing a balance between economic and social goals to promote and support the proficient use of resources.”

Prof. Mustafizur Rahman  
Executive Director  
Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD)  
“The social liabilities of the booming corporate sector in a developing country like Bangladesh will only take shape when the corporate sector will fulfill its expected legal requirements in doing business”
Selim R. F. Hussain  
Managing Director  
IDLC Finance Limited  

“There has never been a more important time than now to accentuate our role as custodians of aspirations of the citizens of our country. As pioneers in the country’s NBFI industry today, we possess the unparallel advantage of knowledge, thought leadership and innovation that forward our efforts to promote financial inclusion and economic empowerment. At IDLC, we follow a unique concept where our commitment towards our stakeholders, the environment and the community is reflected in our everyday decisions and operations. For us, Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) is not parallel to our core function; rather it is closely integrated with our business strategies to create the maximum value.”

Anis A. Khan  
Managing Director & CEO  
Mutual Trust Bank Limited  

“Mutual Trust Bank Limited (MTB) believes in implementing its moral obligations, as a socially responsible organization, by carrying out its Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiatives in line with global norms. MTB is conscious of the fact that a large segment of its clientele is sensitive about the country’s CSR activities undertaken by the financial institutions. Most importantly, MTB is eager to aid the disadvantaged population through greater financial inclusion. The Bank’s CSR policy reflects its efforts to help improve the lives of the existing and potential clients by financing agriculture, small enterprises and renewable energy enterprises at single digit interest rate.”

Feroz Rahim  
Managing Director  
Rahimafrooz Limited  

“We set ourselves the highest standards in responsible behavior and our passion for success is aligned with the development of the country”
Highlights of the CSR Centre’s Activities

Private Sector Engagement:

- Together with Dfid Bangladesh, IBLF (International Business leaders Forum, UK) and IDE (International Development Enterprises) organized a discussion on Inclusive Business and presented examples of Best Practices in 2011.
- CSR Centre in partnership with BRAC, ICDDR,B facilitated the private sector engagement event for UN Secretary General Ban Ki Moon in 2011 in Bangladesh.
- CSR Centre conducted a CSR training with Shiree on Stimulating Household Improvements Resulting in Economic Empowerment in 2011.
- The Centre did a CSR Training for the Board Members of Acid Survivors Foundation in 2012.
- CSR Centre and VSO Bangladesh organized the 7th CSR Platform Meeting on “Labour Standards in Bangladesh”.
- As part of the Pillars in Practice (PIP) Project, the CSR Centre in collaboration with SAI and DIHR convened the “Multi-Stakeholder Advisory Consultation” (MAC) dialogue in Dhaka, Bangladesh.
- The Nordic Chamber of Commerce and Industry in Bangladesh (NCCI), Bangladesh Enterprise Institute (BEI) and Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) Centre jointly organized a Roundtable Discussion titled ‘Responsible Business through Partnerships and CSR’.
- The Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) Centre, as one of the founder members of SANSAR (South Asian Network on Sustainability and Responsibility), organized a seminar “Multi Stakeholders Platform to Share CSR Initiatives in Bangladesh” in Dhaka, Bangladesh.
- The CSR Centre and the United Nations Global Compact (UNGC) New York office jointly organized “SABP (Sustainable Agriculture Business Principle) Consultation: UNGC Bangladesh” on March 18, 2014 at Square Conference Room, Square Hospital, Dhaka, Bangladesh.
- The Embassy of the Republic of Korea in partnership with the Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) Centre organized a Seminar titled ‘Korea-Bangladesh CSR Seminar 2013: Further Strengthening the 40 Year-Long Partnerships through CSR’ in Hotel Lakeshore, Dhaka, Bangladesh.

Capacity Building:

- Organized a 3-day workshop on ‘Fundamentals of CSR’ with participants from different organizations across different sectors.
- Hosted three trainings on Communication on Progress (CoP) for the UNGC signatories jointly with BEI.
- Organized three trainings on Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) for the existing Global Compact signatories of Bangladesh.
- CSR Centre, UNICEF and Save the Children organized “CSR Managers’ Training on Children’s Rights and Business Principles (CRBP)”.
- The Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) Centre, as one of the founder members of SANSAR (South Asian Network on Sustainability and Responsibility), organized a training “Linkage with Supply Chain in the Agro Sector” on September 10, 2013, at Hotel Washington, Dhaka, Bangladesh.
- CSR Centre provided a day-long CSR Training to Save the Children and its partner NGOs at Save the Children office.
- CSR Centre, Social Accountability International (SAI) and Danish Institute of Human Rights (DIHR) organized day long training sessions on “United Nations Guiding Principle on Business and Human Rights.”
- CSR Centre organized Training on Sustainability Reporting: As per GRI G4 Guideline for different stakeholder groups like Banks, Financial Institutions, Companies, Development Workers etc.
Highlights of the CSR Centre’s Activities

Partnership:

- CSR Centre in partnership with UNDP Bangladesh and BEI promotes the UN Global Compact (UNGC) Principles among the private sector in Bangladesh since 2009. The UNGC Bangladesh Network was launched in January 2009. The CSR Centre is the focal point for the UNGC Bangladesh Network and conducts all capacity building trainings for UNGC members on sustainable reporting such as COP and GRI.

- UNICEF, CSR Centre-the focal point of UN Global Compact in Bangladesh and Save the Children have developed the first comprehensive set of principles to guide companies on the full range of actions to respect and support children’s rights in the workplace, marketplace, and community and organized the national launch of ‘The Child Rights and Business Principles’ in 2012.

- CSR Centre is working in different projects in partnership with Social Accountability International (SAI) & Danish Institute for Human Rights (DIHR), VSO Bangladesh, Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Denmark, Prakruthi, India, Solidaridad, Save the Children, Royal Danish Embassy Dhaka, Danish Institute of Fashion, Ministry of Labour and Employment (MOLE), Government of the People’s Republic of Bangladesh.

Research on CSR:

- CSR research study for M&I Heat Transfer Company, Canada, on labor and gender issues in the Gazipur Industrial area conducted in 2008.

- CSR research study on the Bangladesh chapter of ‘Indian MNCs Operating outside India’ for Partners in Change (PIC), India in 2008.

- CSR research study in tea and pharmaceuticals sector in 2010 for Partners in Change (PIC).

- The Centre conducted a Base Scan Survey on Sustainability Issues and Priorities in the ready-made garment (RMG) of Bangladesh in 2010.

- The Centre conducted a Rapid Scan of Inclusive Business Models in Bangladesh for IBLF (International Business Leaders Forum, UK) and Dfid UK in 2010.

- CSR Centre and VSO- Bangladesh jointly conducted a research on ‘Value Chain Analysis of the Dairy Sub Sector in Bangladesh’ in 2011.

- Conducted a research on ‘Identifying the Challenges of Sustainability of Sugar Sector in Bangladesh’, funded by Prakruthi, India in 2012.

- The Centre conducted the Bangladesh Chapter of a multi-country research titled “CSR in Asia” in partnerships with ENDEVA and GIZ headquarters in 2012.

- CSR Centre in partnership with Prakruthi, India undertaken research Study on Challenges in Sustainability and Corporate Social Responsibility: The Sugar Industry in Bangladesh.

- Conducted an online survey for Local Network Advisory Group: fundraising, governance and accountability survey with the Bangladesh UNGC Local Networks.

- CSR Centre in partnership with Solidaridad has undertaken a mapping study on the cotton supply chain in Bangladesh.

- CSR Centre in partnership with Save the Children Undertaken a Research titled ‘A Study on Existing CSR Policy/Guideline in Bangladesh, India, China, Pakistan and Indonesia’.

Youth Sensitization Program:

- The Centre initiated Youth for CSR (Y4C), a youth sensitization program bringing CSR academics and CSR practitioners into the business schools at North South University, Independent University Bangladesh, BRAC University and Presidency University.

- The objective of the program is to understand CSR issues at national and international levels. As youth are the future leaders, awareness raising issues such as governance, labor issues, environment and climate change are integral part of the discussions.
A growing number of businesses in all regions recognize the importance of reflecting environmental, social and economic considerations in their operations and strategies.

- Ban Ki-Moon, UN Secretary-General
## The Ten Principles of the United Nations Global Compact

### Human Rights

1. **Principle 1**: Businesses should support and respect the protection of internationally proclaimed human rights.

2. **Principle 2**: Make sure that they are not complicit in human rights abuses.

### Labour

3. **Principle 3**: Businesses should uphold the freedom of association and the effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining;

4. **Principle 4**: The elimination of all forms of forced and compulsory labour;

5. **Principle 5**: The effective abolition of child labour; and


### Environment

7. **Principle 7**: Businesses should support a precautionary approach to environmental challenges;

8. **Principle 8**: Undertake initiatives to promote greater environmental responsibility; and


### Anti-Corruption

10. **Principle 10**: Businesses should work against corruption in all its forms, including extortion and bribery.

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**CSR Centre**

Apartment 1 A, House 11, Road 14, Gulshan 1, Dhaka 1212
Phone: (+88) 02 9893723
Email: ceo@csrcentre-bd.org
Website: www.csrcentre-bd.org