

Unofficial Translation



National Child Labour Elimination Policy 2010

Ministry of Labour and Employment
Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

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1. Introduction

The overall socio-economic development strategy of Bangladesh has become a model for many third world countries. Today's Children will be acting as the driving force of the development strategy for tomorrow. The very achievement towards developing our children and making them worthy for a modern and independent nation is not satisfactory. After the emergence of Bangladesh as an independent country, the Children Act' 1974 was enacted imbued with the spirit of great liberation war which paved the way in formulating National Children Policy'1994, undertaking many development projects in this regard including the National Action Plan for Children' 2005-2010. Bangladesh has become the partner of many international, regional and bilateral declarations with ratifying the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and other major child labour related conventions of International Labour Organization (ILO). The said measures and subsequent steps in this regard along with the sincere effort of the Government, successful tripartite consultation between Government, employers and workers, led to the withdrawal of working children from the Ready Made Garments (RMG) industry and that the image of Bangladesh was upheld a lot in the international arena. Even then, a substantive portion of children and adolescents in Bangladesh remain engaged in hazardous work. Child labour still prevails in agriculture and other informal sectors. The very situation of Child Labour is absolutely undesirable for a nation like Bangladesh.

The world is changing in a faster pace with having remarkable development of science and technology and with the emergence of welfare state initiating substantial changes in social life and existing values. To maintain the equilibrium along with these changes, pragmatic policies, rules and regulations are being formulated in parallel to the amendment of existing laws. In the context of transition of social life and values, a social consensus is required to save the traditional values from decaying as well as adapting the adjusted values to mitigate the demand of time as well as to accommodate the values created in response to historical changes with affection and empathy. The said social consensus and renewed policies virtually regulates the social control and mode of changes.

It became the unanimous demand of Government, Non-Governmental Organization (NGOs) and the civil society at large to have a timely policy to move the existing child labour situation towards a positive direction. Within this backdrop, the Child Labour Elimination Policy'2010 came into force with having incorporated necessary elements extracted from

different events and incidents happened in recent national, regional and global level in socio-economic, cultural and geo-political arenas. The existing laws and regulations related to child and child labour will be gradually integrated into this policy, and it will be considered as the determinant and standard instrument while enacting and amending laws and formulating rules and regulations on child and child labour issues in public and private sector.

2. Child Labour Situation in Bangladesh

Like many other South Asian countries, child labour is also prevalent in Bangladesh. In childhood days when children are supposed to go to schools with books, papers, pencils and play with their friends, many children have to work for their family livelihood. When a poor father becomes victim to the scourge of persistent poverty, it is impossible for him to keep his children safe, cuddled and bonded with family by parental care. In this juncture once dislodged from the family, children become one of the mass of the society. Some of them start selling their labour as workers in hotel-restaurant, factory-workshop, and as domestic workers. Beside these, children also are engaged in load carrying at the market, job of a porter, begging, rickshaw pulling, pulling of hand carts, *bidi* stacking etc. Some turn into street children being unable to manage a job. Despite possessing all the childlike attributes, a significant number of them become rootless and ruthless being because they have been disintegrated from their families and nobody owns them as pleasing human beings. Eventually they are deprived from all opportunities of proving themselves as good citizens.

Another depressing side of child labour in Bangladesh is that some children are lured from their villages into towns and cities and often trafficked abroad where girls are compelled to engage in prostitution and pornography while boys get involved in many anti-social and illicit activities.

3. The Causes of Child Labour

The first and foremost cause of child labour in Bangladesh is the economic impoverishment. Poverty-ridden family cannot afford to carry the educational expenses because they are poor and pass their days in hardship. So, parents or guardians feel reluctant to send their children to school. Under such circumstances, parents consider their children better to assist their profession or engage in any other job to supplement the family income. On the other hand, the underprivileged children not going to school and the drop-out children from school involve themselves in

various occupations. The employers, owners, and managers and concerned authorities prefer to engage children at work as they can easily be exploited to work longer hours with minimum wages.

The socio-economic adversity also affects the child labour situation in Bangladesh. In case of death of a head of household, the family finds it very difficult to meet the basic needs, let alone children's education. In case parents get separated, their children face extreme hardships in managing bread and butter. Nevertheless, poverty stricken families, usually show less interest in adopting family planning measures which ultimately turns a family large in size with lot of sufferings in maintaining the family.

Moreover, widespread unemployment, social insecurity, resource scarcity are the underlying factors of migration from rural to urban areas. Natural calamities like riverbank erosion, floods, droughts, storms and tidal surges, earthquakes etc. drive children towards greater risks of being engaged in physical labour.

Due to little learning, poverty and lack of awareness, many parents consider education as a non gainful activity and that they lose their patience to continue their children's education for a continuous period of 10 or 15 years. Child labour is also increasing due to non availability of education materials, lack of opportunity for education and indifferent attitude of parents regarding the negative impact of child labour. Due to the culture of excessive dependence on the domestic help and conventional way of living in urban life, even the attentive pupils of rural areas are picked up and brought to the town for domestic work.

4. Child Labour: Constitutional and Legal Position

(a) The fundamental rights of the citizens including the children are spelled out in the Constitution of the People's Republic of Bangladesh. Articles 11, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19 and 20, constituting the fundamental principles of state policy of the Constitution have laid emphasis on ensuring compulsory primary education for the children as well as adopting special measures for the children who are physically and mentally challenged. The Constitution has guaranteed the fundamental rights of citizens in Articles 27, 28, 29, 31, 34, 37, 38, 39, 40 and 41. Particularly, forced labour is completely prohibited and access to legal remedy is assured in case of violation of fundamental rights.

(b) After independence, Bangladesh enacted the Children Act 1974 (Act XXXIX of 1974) for the protection of the children and their rights. It

appears from the title of the Act that it focuses mainly on the children. The Act clearly delineates the definition of a child, his or her age, scope of the child's rights, childhood, guardianship, protection of child's property, provision of protection for children in civil and criminal proceedings and legal custody. This act is a remarkable milestone to establish the rights of children.

(c) The definition of child and the adolescent is further elaborated in the Labour Act 2006 (Act XLII of 2006). Sections 34-44 in Chapter 3 of the Act have dealt with employment of children and adolescents as worker. The Act prohibits appointment of any children in formal sector. The Act also envisages that government from time to time through gazette notification would publish the list of hazardous occupations and the list would come within the ambit of the prohibitory clause. However, it provides provision for engaging a child or an adolescent in light work under special circumstances for specific working hours subject to the certification by a physician.

(d) Birth and Death Registration Act 2004 (Act XXIX of 2004) is a major safeguard for the protection of rights of children. This Act has made it compulsory to register the birth of a child which would resolve the future complexity relating to the determination of the age of a child.

(e) The National Children Policy 1994 focuses on the attainment and protection of rights of children, definition of child, age of the child, the extent of his or her rights, childhood, guardianship, protection of the child's property, provision of protection for children in civil and criminal proceedings and in legal custody.

The initiatives and efforts towards the elimination of child labour of Bangladesh have also been acknowledged and appreciated by the international communities. The Government of Bangladesh has ratified 33 Conventions related to labour issues including the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and ILO Convention No. 182(Worst forms of Child Labour).

Along with the mentioned legal provisions it is important that these Acts be appropriately and systematically enforced.

5. The Objectives of National Child Labour Elimination Policy 2010

The main objective of this policy is to make meaningful changes in the lives of the children by withdrawing them from all forms of child labour

including the hazardous work and worst forms of child labour. The main objectives of the policy are as follows:

- i. Withdrawing working children from different forms of occupations including the hazardous work and the worst forms of child labour;
- ii. Involving parents of working children in income generating activities with a view of getting children out of the vicious circle of poverty;
- iii. Offering stipend and grant in order to bring the working children back to school;
- iv. Extending special attention for the children who are affected by floods, cyclones, tidal bores, riverbank erosions, drought and desertification, etc;
- v. Providing special emphasis for indigenous and physically challenged children to bring them back to congenial environment;
- vi. Ensuring coordination amongst the concerned stakeholders and sectors functioning for the welfare of working children;
- vii. Enacting pragmatic laws and strengthening institutional capacity for their enforcement;
- viii. Raising awareness amongst parents, mass people and civil societies about the harmful consequences of child labour;
- ix. Planning and implementing different short, medium and long term strategies and programs to eliminate various forms of child labour from Bangladesh by 2015.

6. Definition and Age of Working Children

The terms 'child' and 'adolescent' have been defined differently, in different national and international documents, even in the legal instruments of Bangladesh. As age is the decisive factor in determining the definition of a child, it would have been better if a uniform age of a child-adolescent could have been fixed. Indeed so has been the demand from different level of the society. The variations in the age of our children under different legal instruments are due to their distinct physical and psychological development than those of the developed countries. The variations also exist due to ensuring of the multi-dimensional rights of a child or an adolescent.

The Bangladesh Labour Act 2006 (Act XLII of 2006) also defines the “child” and the “adolescent” on the basis of age. As per section 2(8) of the Act, a person who has attained the age of 14 but below the age of 18 is considered to be an ‘adolescent’ and as per section 2(63), a person not attaining the age of 14 is defined as a ‘child’. Except that the definition of ‘child labour’ or ‘child labourer’ cannot be traced from any public or private document. Therefore the term ‘child’ and ‘adolescent’ as defined by the Labour Act 2006 (Act XLII of 2006) shall be referred to in all discussion of child labour. According to this definition, the labour provided by a child would be known as ‘child labour’. In that case, it is not desirable to use the term “Child Labourer” to indicate ‘any person in labour’ rather the term ‘child engaged in labour’ (*srome niojito shishu*) or ‘working child’ (*sromojibi shishu*) should be used in this regard.

7. Classification of Working Children and Child Labour

- a. Child labour is commonly found in two sectors in Bangladesh;
 1. Formal Sector: namely factories and industries, commercial organizations, communication and transportation, ship breaking, etc.
 2. Informal Sector: namely agriculture, livestock, fishery, household work, construction work, brick breaking, pulling of rickshaw/van, day labouring, *chhinnomul shishu* (street child) etc.
- b. As per existing legal provisions, children are usually engaged in different establishment and occupations or work under six broad categories:
 - i. Trainee
 - ii. Replacement
 - iii. Casual
 - iv. Apprentice
 - v. Temporary and
 - vi. Permanent workers

8. Wages for Child Labour and Working Hours

Although child labour is prohibited in Bangladesh like many other countries in the world, the employers are still interested to employ children as they can be engaged longer hours in exchange of pittance in the name of wages. In most cases, working children have to be satisfied

either with only subsistence or the minimal wages. Until the child labour is entirely eliminated from Bangladesh, an interim arrangement can be made of fixing national minimum wages for children and the adolescents engaged both in the formal and informal sectors.

9. Education, Health (Physical and Mental) and Nutrition of Working Children

Programmes or initiatives undertaken by government relating to education, health and nutrition of working children have to be fully implemented. Inter-agency cooperation and coordination have to be strengthened to ensure effective and efficient implementation of all programmes and project related to education, healthcare and nutrition which are being implemented by the government and non-government organizations including various UN agencies like UNICEF and International Labour Organization (ILO). Besides, urgent measures have to be taken for the formulation of long-term programmes and projects targeting education, healthcare and nutrition of working children incorporated with their implementation strategies.

10. Working Environment of Working Children

Despite prohibition of child labour by various Acts, children are being engaged in various occupations due to circumstances and surroundings. In this connection, there should be constant vigilance over the working environment of the children to make it congenial. If a child engaged in labour:

- works for more than 5 hours per day;
- performs such work that creates undue pressure on his/her physical and psychological health and social status;
- works in an insecure and unhealthy environment;
- works without wage or with irregular payment or for low wages;
- carries out duties disproportionate to his or her capacity;
- works in such a condition that hinders his or her education;
- It is forced labour;
- Is compelled to do such work which demean human dignity;
- becomes the victim of physical and/or mental torture and sexual exploitation; and
- gets no opportunity of leisure or recreation;

then the very working conditions or environment would be regarded as hazardous and demeaning for his or her physical and mental health i.e. life threatening to life. All necessary steps and efforts should be taken to rescue the children from such working condition or environment.

With a view to improve the working conditions or environment in favour of the children, an employer in consultation with the working children and his or her guardian will adhere to the following policies and principles:

a. Non-hazardous Work According to Child's Capability

- Employing children according to the age determined by the Acts and not to employ children below 14 years as a regular employee;
- Ensuring the children at domestic work not to perform any hazardous work and providing them with proper food and accommodation, education, recreation since they work full time; and
- Refraining from subjecting child workers to physical, mental and sexual persecution and abuse.

b. Conditions of Employment

Prior to engage a child in any work, an employer or owner in consultation with the children and their guardians would fix clear stipulations of the job following the provision of relevant rules. In these stipulations, the following matters are to be included, which would be applicable on a sectoral basis:

- Refraining from engaging children in hazardous work;
- Maintaining a daily work list;
- Specifying daily working hours;
- Ensuring at least one weekly holiday;
- Providing opportunity for education or skills development training for the child;
- Paying wages regularly at rates mutually agreed upon; and
- Notifying at least one month ahead of terminating from work etc.

c. Working Environment

- The working environment must be conducive to the working children's physical and mental health and wellbeing;
- The working environment must not be degrading so as it would encourage or compel the child to be involved in anti-social activities; and
- A child must not be engaged in any work that would hamper his or her dignity or reputation.

d. Education and Recreation

- As education and recreation is fundamental right of children, the employer or owner must provide opportunity for a break of at least 30 minutes to one hour after the stipulated working hour, i.e. five hours;
- Irrespective of the nature of work performed by a child, the employer or owner must ensure adequate educational and recreational facilities after the stipulated working hour
- The employer or owner must ensure the participation of working children in all national and international festivities, in particular the Child Rights Week, National Children Day, International Children Day, International Labour Day (May Day) etc.

e. Healthcare Services

- If a child falls sick or faces any accident while working, the employer or owner should bear all expenses of his or her medical treatment and rehabilitation required; and
- The family member should have the opportunity to meet the child during his or her illness.

f. Opportunity of Meeting with the Family Members

- Children working as domestic workers must have opportunities to meet with their parents, family members and relatives regularly; and
- Children engaged in other types of work should also be given the opportunity to meet their parents, families and relatives at least once a month.

g. Future Security Provision of the Child

- Welfare initiatives like insurance policy, savings policy etc. should be undertaken for the future financial security of a child who has continued working in a specific workplace for at least six months and more;
- Children can forge in understanding technical matters easily. Therefore, In the light of existing legal provisions, working children have to be offered opportunities of training for advanced technological skills, so that they can equip themselves as productive workforce in future competitive global market; and
- Providing gratuity at the end of contract.

11. Special Action Plan for the Physically Challenged, Specially Disadvantaged, Street Children, Backward and Ethnic Children

The Government is to take special measures for the physically and mentally challenged children, street children, deserted and orphan children and children from different ethnic communities. If necessary, separate laws may be enacted and action plans may be formulated for them. If children are engaged either in formal or informal labour due to adverse situation, the Government will take effective measures to pursue the concerned employer or owner to relax their service conditions and to create relatively more conducive environment.

12. Elimination of Child Labour: Formulation of Pragmatic Strategy

The Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh has already taken various steps to eliminate all forms of child labour, particularly all types of hazardous work. The Ministry of Labour and Employment (MOLE), Department of Labour, Department of Inspection for Factories and Establishments, other government organizations and field level agencies are implementing these initiatives. Government should take measures for efficient implementation of the projects that have been initiated in collaboration with different international and non-government organizations. The Government may make more efforts by adopting the following working strategies of action:

- Identifying scope of strategy of action in order to implement the policy
- Determining goals and objectives
- Setting up programmes
- Determining the time frame
- Selecting organizations with vested responsibility for policy implementation
- Selecting the associate/collaborative organizations

In order to translate the above six working strategies of actions into reality, the following measures and steps can be taken into consideration:

a. Policy Implementation and Institutional Development

1. **Key Objectives:** Formulating proper action plan and ensuring institutional development by maintaining transparency and

accountability in implementing programmes or activities with a view to eliminate child labour entirely.

2. **Target Activities:** Formulating effective strategic plan and ensuring implementation of it for the elimination of the worst forms of child labour within the stipulated time frame.
3. **Duration:** 2010-2015
4. **Main Coordinating/Implementing Body:**
 - Ministry of Labour and Employment
5. **Associate/Collaborative Bodies:**
 - Department of Labour;
 - Department of Inspection for Factories and Establishments;
 - Minimum wage Board;
 - Division, District and Upazila Offices under the Ministry of Labour and Employment;
 - Employer's Association, Trade Union;
 - Cabinet Division;
 - Prime Minister's Office;
 - Ministry of Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs;
 - Ministry of Women and Children Affairs;
 - Ministry of Social Welfare; and
 - Various Non-Government Organizations and International Development Agencies.

b. Education

1. **Key Objectives:** Ensuring compulsory and free pre-primary or primary education for the children who are likely to be engaged as child worker, and creating opportunities of practical education along with non-formal education up to secondary level.
2. **Target Activities:** Ensuring free, compulsory and quality education for working children within the stipulated time frame.
3. **Duration:** 2010-2015
4. **Main Coordinating/ Implementing Body:**
 - Ministry of Labour and Employment

5. Associate/Collaborative Bodies:

- Ministry of Primary and Mass Education;
- Ministry of Education;
- Ministry of Women and Children Affairs;
- Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development and Co-operatives;
- Owner's or employers' associations, trade unions, private organizations; and
- Various national and international development agencies.

c. Health and Nutrition

1. **Key Objectives:** Formulating separate action plan both for work place and home within the purview of the National Health and Nutrition Policy and ensuring its implementation to provide sufficient physical and mental healthcare facilities and adequate nutrition for working children.
2. **Target Activities:** Undertaking and implementing comprehensive health and nutrition programmes and projects for working children in line with the National Health and Nutrition Policy.
3. **Duration:** 2010-2015
4. **Main Coordinating/Implementing Body:**
 - Ministry of Labour and Employment
5. **Associate/ Collaborative Bodies:**
 - Ministry of Health and Family Welfare;
 - Ministry of Women and Children Affairs;
 - Ministry of Primary and Mass Education;
 - Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development and Co-operatives;
 - Other concerned subordinate offices at Division, District and Upazila level;
 - Employers' Association; and
 - Various Non government and International Development Agencies.

d. Social Awareness Raising and Motivation

1. **Key Objectives:** Creating social awareness on elimination of child labour; motivating people against child labour and changing attitude and behavioral pattern towards Child Labour.
2. **Target Activities:** Creating social awareness amongst mass people including children and their parents or guardians, employers' or owners' associations, trade union, professional associations, and media; raising awareness regarding family planning, preventing economic exploitation and child labour at all levels of the society.
3. **Duration:** 2010-2015 and beyond.
4. **Main Coordinating / Implementing Body:**
 - Ministry of Labour and Employment
5. **Associate/ Collaborative Bodies:**
 - Ministry of Information;
 - Ministry of Women and Children Affairs;
 - Ministry of Social Welfare;
 - Ministry of Agriculture (Department of Agricultural Extension. Agriculture Information Service);
 - Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development and Co-operatives;
 - Ministry of Religious Affairs;
 - Divisional District and Upazila Administration;
 - Print and Electronic Media;
 - Professional Body/Trade Union;
 - Child and Juvenile Organizations; and
 - Various Non-Government and International Development Agencies.

e. Legislation Enforcement

1. **Key Objectives:** Amending the existing acts; formulating obligatory rules to effect the acts; and eliminating child labour including ensuring safety of working children by appropriate application of these acts and rules;

2. **Target Activities:** Recognizing informal sectors of child labour within the framework of existing laws, rules and regulations and to include separate schedules for formal, informal, hazardous, safe, light and heavy work by amending the existing laws.
3. **Duration:** 2010-2015
4. **Main Coordinating /implementing Body:**
 - Cabinet Division;
 - Ministry of Labour and Employment
 - Ministry of Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs
5. **Associate/ Collaborative Bodies:**
 - Bangladesh Parliament / Parliament Secretariat;
 - Office of the Attorney General For Bangladesh; and
 - Bangladesh Law Commission.

f. Employment / Labour Market

1. **Key Objective:** Creating adequate employment opportunities and access to competitive labour market for the children who has availed trade based training and attained eligibility for work as per legal provisions.
2. **Target Activities:** Arranging appropriate and adequate employment in local/foreign market by providing necessary technical and vocational training in related field and to ensure congenial environment with a view to ensure sustainability in the competitive market for the children engaged in both formal and informal sectors who have acquired necessary skills in specific trades. Moreover, involve the families of these children in income generating activities.
3. **Duration:** 2010-2015 and beyond.
4. **Main Coordinating/ Implementing Body:**
 - Ministry of Labour and Employment
5. **Associate/ Collaborative Bodies:**
 - Ministry of Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment;
 - Ministry of Foreign Affairs;
 - Ministry of Youth and Sports;
 - Ministry of Agriculture;
 - Ministry of Industries;

- Ministry of Home Affairs;
- Employers/Employers Associations
- BGMEA/BKMEA/FBCCI/ BAIRA, etc ; and
- Various National and International Development Agencies.

g. Prevention of Child Labour and Safety of Children Engaged in Labour

1. **Key Objectives:** Preventing children from engaging into child labour protecting the working children from the possible harms to their lives; preventing unsafe migration of children from rural to urban areas; and to reduce the life risks of working children by improving the working environment.

2. Target Activities:

- Making necessary arrangement for fulfilling the basic needs of children at the grass root level i.e. at village level with a view to discourage the migration from rural to urban areas after being the victim of poverty, river erosion, broken family, etc and arranging rehabilitation for them. Creating employment/ alternative employment opportunities for the capable family members of these children;
- Protecting working children from hazardous work and ensure lawful rights, including working hours and wages; and
- Preventing trafficking of children.

3. **Duration:** Now and beyond.

4. Main Coordinating/Implementing Body:

- Ministry of Labour and Employment

5. Associate/ Collaborative Bodies:

- Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development and Co-operatives
- Ministry of Home Affairs;
- Ministry of Religious Affairs;
- Ministry of Social Welfare;
- Divisional, District and Upazila Administration;
- Local Influential Persons or Groups, Religious Leaders. Teachers Relatives; and

- Local Non Government Organizations.

h. Social and Family Reintegration

1. **Key Objectives:** Taking necessary measures for social and family reintegration by withdrawal of working children from hazardous and worst forms of work.

2. **Target Activities:**

- Bringing the working children in the mainstream of society through gradual withdrawal from the hazardous occupations both in formal and informal sectors;
- Arranging reintegration with their family, if possible;
- Establishing reformatory, rehabilitation centres, drop-in centres, helpline and arranging psycho-social counseling and providing necessary treatment, food and entertainment at division, district, upazila and even at the union level for the physically and psychologically distorted children.

3. **Duration:** 2010-2015 and beyond.

4. **Main Coordinating/Implementing Body:**

- Ministry of Labour and Employment

5. **Associate/ Collaborative Bodies:**

- Ministry of Social Welfare;
- Ministry of Women and Children Affairs;
- Ministry of Home Affairs;
- Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development and Co-operatives
- Ministry of Health and Family welfare;
- Employers /Employers' Association; and
- Different Non Government and International Organizations.

i. Research and Training

1. **Key Objectives:** Identifying underlying causes of child labour and determining possible measures for elimination of child labour and conduct research and training in this connection.

2. Target Activities:

- Creating a panel of researchers to identify the child labour situation in national and international levels, identifying causes behind child labour, suggesting measures for rectification and determining appropriate scope for rectification of acts and rules and to arrange training to perform the activities efficiently at field level. Besides, conduct the formal and informal area of child labour scientifically to the extent possible. Moreover, collecting information, preservation, evaluation and establishing a dependable database system through conducting scientifically coordinated survey on child labour both in formal and informal sectors.

3. Duration: Now and beyond.

4. Main Coordinating/ Implementing Body:

- Ministry of Labour and Employment

5. Associate/ Collaborative Bodies:

- Ministry of Women and Children Affairs;
- Different Non-Government Organizations and International Development Agencies;
- Non-Government Organizations
- International Organizations; and
- Regional Associations, such as: SAARC, ASEAN, etc.

j. Monitoring and Evaluation

- 1. Key Objectives:** To monitor, evaluate and recommend actions regarding the policy implementation and institutional development, assessing the level of success in achieving objectives related to education, health and nutrition, social awareness, motivation, formulation of legislation and enforcement, creation of employment/labour market, prevention of child labour and to oversee the policy implementation and institutional development related to safety of children engaged in labour and reintegration of children with families. To monitor, evaluate and recommend the progress of research and training programmes and performance of implementing bodies and support organizations in carrying out duties in their respective fields.

2. Target Activities:

- To monitor and evaluate the timely and effective efforts of the assigned/responsible bodies and support organizations in achieving the core objectives of the specified plan of action under the leadership of coordinating bodies and provide directions to the assigned/responsible bodies and support organizations towards the elimination of child labour.

3. Duration: Now and beyond.

4. Main Coordinating Body:

- Ministry of Labour and Employment

5. Associate/ Collaborative Bodies:

- Ministry of Women and Children Affairs;
- Ministry of Primary and Mass Education;
- Ministry of Education;
- Ministry of Social Welfare;
- Ministry of Health and Family Welfare;
- Ministry of Home Affairs;
- Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development and Co-operatives
- Ministry of Agriculture;
- Ministry of Fisheries and Livestock;
- Implementation Monitoring and Evaluation Division
- Ministry of Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs
- The Concerned Others Subordinate Offices at Division, District and Upazila Level
- Employers' and Labours' Association; and
- Different Private and International Development Agencies.

13. Focal Ministry/Focal Point

The responsibility to monitor the child labour related issues should be vested on a specific ministry of the Government. Currently, the Ministry of Women and Children Affairs deals with issues related to children while the Ministry of Labour and Employment deals with the issues related to labour. But the overall responsibility for overseeing child labour related matters has not yet been assigned to any specific ministry. Considering the different aspect of child

labour issue, the Ministry of Labour and Employment can be selected as the focal ministry for dealing with child labour related matters. Likewise, the Labour wing of the Ministry of Labour and Employment should be the focal point to oversee child labour issues.

14. Child Labour Unit

Due to ever-increasing importance of child labour at national and international level, many programmes and projects are being developed and implemented towards the elimination of child labour in Bangladesh by different ministries, divisions, directorates and departments, international development agencies, NGOs as well as local level institutions. Given that there is substantive number of children engaged in hazardous occupations in Bangladesh and with a view that Bangladesh is working towards the ratification of ILO Convention 138 (minimum age convention), it is hoped that there would be expansion of related activities in bringing positive change in the child labour situation. Moreover, for the sake of effective coordination of the activities mentioned in this **National Child Labour Elimination Policy 2010**, a **Child Labour Unit** can be established under the leadership of Labour Wing of the Ministry of Labour and Employment.

15. National Child Labour Welfare Council

A National Council may be constituted at the national level to oversee and supervise the child labour situation comprising representatives from government and non-government organizations, employers' and worker's association and experts on child labour issues. The Council will act as a "Think-Tank", which will observe and analyze the national and international child labour context and situation, and advise the Government accordingly. The functions of the Council would be lobbying at the highest Govt policy level on implementation of the National Child Labour Elimination Policy, 2010 and dealing with other relevant issues like conducting hearing, investigation and suggest remedies on any adverse situations related to child labour.

16. Participation of Non-Government Organizations

Elimination of child labour is a continuous process which includes different efforts and activities. In parallel with the Government, many national and international organizations are implementing

their own programmes and projects towards the elimination of child labour. The concerned Government and non-government organizations should take initiative to redesign their respective child labour related programmes and projects according to the spirit of this Policy. The national and international organizations and donor agencies that are willing to work towards the elimination of child labour in Bangladesh should undertake and implement their respective programmes and projects in line with the policy.

17. Conclusion

Every child preserves the right to enjoy a healthy and natural childhood. Yet many children in our country are deprived of enjoying this universal right. Children from poverty stricken family are driven to take on hazardous occupations for the purpose of raising their livelihood which in turn drives them towards an uncertain future. In order to get rid of this situation, it is necessary to invest all our efforts and resources in implementing the Child Labour Elimination Policy 2010 at family, social, Govt-non Govt, national and international level which in turn will ensure the withdrawal of children from all types of child labour including worst forms of child labour and hazardous work. In the light of this document, if the existing Acts, rules and regulations are reorganized and the plan of action are adopted and implemented, our children would obviously grow up as “enlightened human beings”.

N.B: The Child Labour Elimination Policy 2010 has been prepared as per the approval in the Cabinet Meeting held on 1 March 2010