



Campaign for Popular Education (CAMPE)

# Closing Report on Youth-led Action Research-2021

In Cooperation with ASPBAE



## Campaign for Popular Education (CAMPE)

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## Acronyms

ASPBAE	: Asia South Pacific Association for Basic and Adult Education – the Asia Pacific regional education coalition
CAMPE	: Campaign for Popular Education – the national coalition for education
CHT	: Chittagong Hill Tracts
HDI	: Human Development Index
LGBT	: Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender
MoE	: Ministry of Education
NEET	: (Youths) Not in Education, Employment, or Training
NEP	: National Education Policy
NTVQF	: National Technical and Vocational Qualification Framework
RPL	: Recognition of Prior Learning
TVET	: Technical and Vocational Education and Training
UNDP	: United Nations Development Programme
WHO	: World Health Organisation

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## 1.0 Introduction

Every year around 2.1 million youths are supposed to enter the job market in Bangladesh however, in reality, only 1.3 million jobs are created each year (LFS 2016-17, BBS). The remaining 0.8 million youth, each year, is adding to the unemployed population. In addition, low labour productivity is a longstanding concern for Bangladesh. The COVID-19 Pandemic has further worsened the situation. Thus, accelerating investments in human capability enhancement and addressing skills challenges, particularly focused on youth in adversity is critical for improving youth productivity and accelerating growth. CAMPE in collaboration with its member organisation intends to contribute to the process of empowering youths in selected locations in four districts of Bangladesh under the Youth-led Action Research (YAR) Programme supported by the Asia South Pacific Association for Basic and Adult Education (ASPBAE) and, Education OutLoud (EOL-ASA).

Though every year around 2.1 million youths are supposed to enter the job market in Bangladesh however, in reality, only 1.3 million jobs are created each year (LFS 2016-17, BBS). The remaining 0.8 million youth, each year, is adding to the unemployed population. It is necessary to take various initiatives to prepare the youth to enter the world of work after completing their studies. This research will help the youth to acquire life skills and develop leadership. This study tried to collect specific information about the challenges and possibilities of education and livelihood of the youth at the village / mahalla / ward / union level. Therefore, all the work from preparing the question paper to preparing the report will be done by the youth. The youth will advocate with the local government and upazila / district education administration about the results obtained from this applied research. In addition, the mass literacy campaign will participate in the national level advocacy initiatives on quality education and lifelong learning.

The role of young society is crucial in overcoming the evolutionary consequences of Covid-19. Moreover, special priority has been given to the young generation in achieving Vision 2041 and Sustainable Development Goal-2030. Therefore, considering the future development of the country, it is necessary to develop the young society properly to make Bangladesh a middle income country and a developed country step by step. SDG 4.6 is especially important for youth development,

In the election manifesto of the present government-2018, many expectations have been expressed about the youth: The power of youth Ñ the prosperity of Bangladesh 'has mentioned the youth as a valuable asset of the country. One-third of the total population of Bangladesh is youth, which is about 53 million. The main force in realizing the dream of 'Sonar Bangla' and building a digital Bangladesh is the youth.

The government is committed to achieving the goal of transforming this youth group of the country into a well-organized, disciplined and productive force. The priorities of the present government in youth development are quality education of youth, skill development and

employment, physical and mental health, healthy recreation system, political and civic empowerment and building a youth free from terrorism, communalism, militancy and drugs. To this end, mass literacy campaign is constantly working.

Since its inception, CAMPE has been working with a number of non-governmental organizations, academics and researchers working in the field of education have been conducting advocacy activities on '**Quality Education for All**' in the field of education and literacy. To this end, the CAMPE has been conducting various research activities besides organizing various programs at national, local and grassroots level with different stakeholders. CAMPE believes that only educated and creative young society can take our country forward. In this point of view CAMPE has taken an initiatives to conduct a youth-led Research in Cumilla district with DARPAN, Bandarban district with BNKS (ASPBAE), Khulna district with Ashroy Foundation and Faridpur district with RACINE (Education OutLoud -Advocacy & Social Accountability)

## **Objective of and Methodology's YAR-2021:**

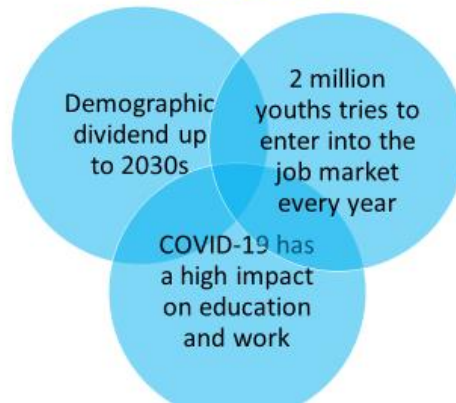
### **Objectives:**

The main objective of YAR 2021 of CAMPE is to conduct Youth-led Action Research (YAR) in selected locations of Bangladesh to generate evidence, strengthened evidence-based youth engagement in the advocacy initiatives in Bangladesh and also contribute to the regional and global process. The Specific Objective of the initiative is to:

- i) Build capacity of the youths in eight selected communities in two districts through the member organisations of CAMPE;
- ii) Empower the selected youths through enhancing knowledge on SDG4, right to education, human rights-based approach to education, and orient them with some leadership quality for example, 21 irrefutable laws of leadership by John C. Maxwell.
- iii) Capacity building of selected youths on the youth-led Action Research methodology and follow-up support to conduct YAR in selected communities;
- iv) Encourage youths to carryout local level advocacy and also engage some of their representatives in the national and regional level advocacy initiatives.



## Youth in Adversity in Bangladesh



## National Youth Policy 2017, Bangladesh

### Vision

Moral, humane and forward-looking youth capable of boosting prosperity and glory of Bangladesh

### Mission

Ensure fulfillment of youth potential and youth empowerment to establish these in every sphere of life

### Definition of Youth

Any citizen between 18 and 35 years of age shall be regarded as youth.

### Priority Areas for Youth Development

Empowerment (Education, Training, Employment, Entrepreneurship and ICT)

Health and Recreation

Good Governance

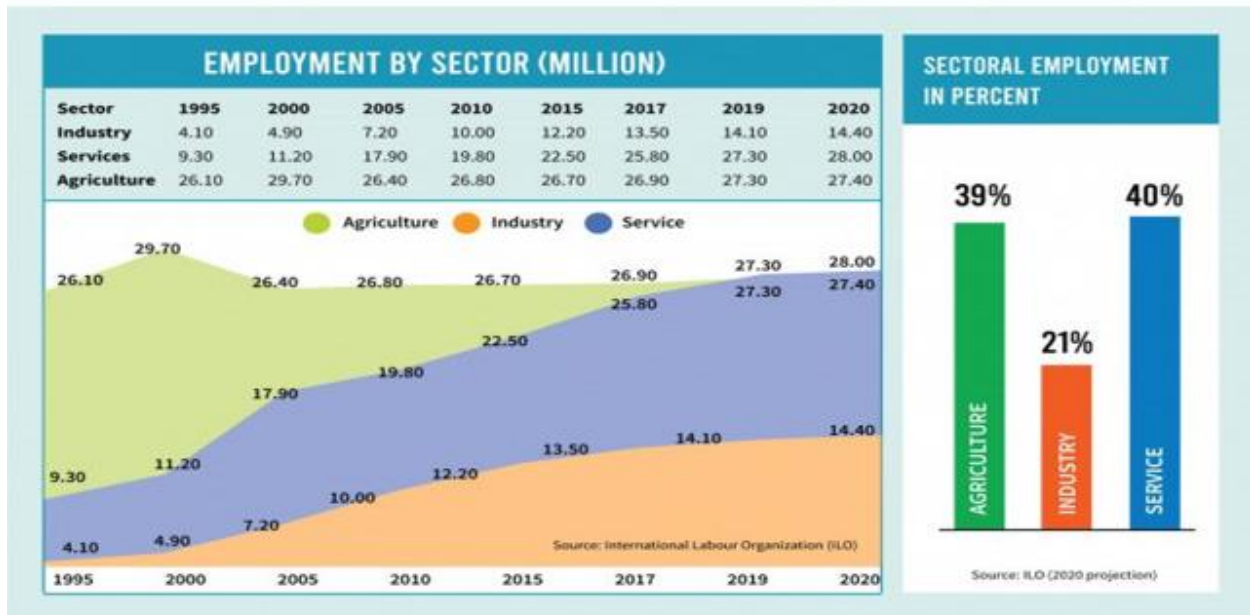
Sustainable Development

Equitable Development

Building a Healthy Society

Globalisation

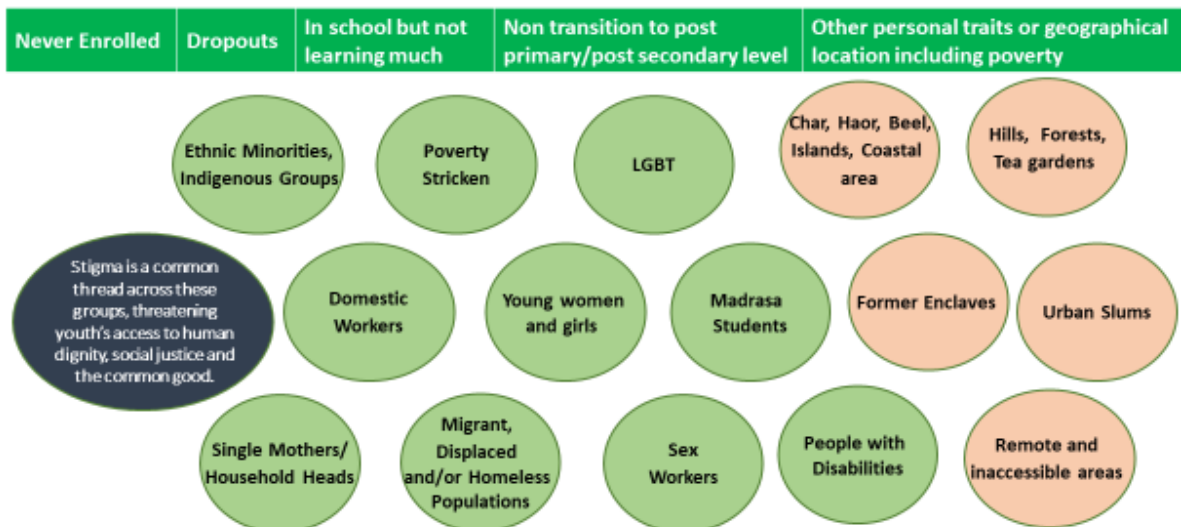
Survey and Research



Source: Business Standard 21 January, 2020; <https://www.tbsnews.net/economy/service-sector-employment-overtake-agriculture-2020-38091>

## INCLUSIVE QUALITY EDUCATION FOR ALL – LEAVING NO ONE BEHIND

### WHO IS LEFT BEHIND?



Source: Adopted from CAMPE and Synargas, 2019



## **Methodology/Process:**

Both Quantitative and Qualitative methods have been applied for the study.

Both Youth's age range 15 to 25 years will be considered as the core participants of the YAR 2021 supported by ASPBAE. More than half of the participants will be from the marginalised families in terms of sex, ethnicity, household economic condition, social exclusion, geographical challenges, or based on the personal abilities or disabilities. Out of school youths, child labourer or victims of early marriage will also be considered as criteria to engage in the process.

Once the youths are selected, capacity building initiative will be taken for enhancing their understanding on SDGs, (particularly SDG4), right to education, human rights-based approach to education, leadership qualities. The issues also include the holistic development of youth, promoting 21st Century Skills, addressing adversity factors in education, understanding demographic dividend, and encouraging youth leadership and youth-led action research.

Strengthening understanding including of the concept and metadata and the methodology and debates etc. on human rights, gender equality, cultural diversity, ESD and GCED (global citizenship), climate change, education in emergency, etc. Also have a deeper understanding about the local government institutions in selected location through member organizations to support young representatives in the GECD initiatives and carryout follow-up interventions for promoting right to education, address exclusion factors in education, promote TVET, ICT for education, school to work transition, and youth entrepreneurship.

After the capacity building initiatives, they will engage more youths from their community, try to understand their community, identify key concerns of youths focused on right to education, their livelihood, and school to work transition.

On implementation of the YAR, the youths will engage with the community leaders and local level duty bearers to address the issues and challenges identified by the YAR and carryout advocacy to solve the problem or address the concerns.

Raise youth voice on enhanced use of ICT – ranging to ICT for workplace and school, ICT based classroom management and teaching-learning process, understanding big data and data visualization, advance use of social media, etc. Also promote future education thinking, including the online teaching-learning process and its management, blended learning, have an orientation of big data, AI, IoT, blockchain, and some other innovations in education. Some of the issues from the local level will be passed to the national and regional level for strengthening the advocacy initiative for upholding right to education.

A compiled report will be prepared and disseminated as part of the advocacy initiatives of CAMPE. There will be section to provide brief highlights of each of the districts/communities as appropriate.

## Detail of Major Interventions

### 1.00: Engagement of local member Organizations/ Preparatory Work

In preparatory phase CAMPE selected 2 no of organization supported by ASPBAE Bandarban- Ethnic communities in hill districts and Cumilla, advanced in Education but high level of gender based violence based on mentioned criteria in June 2021.

### YAR 2021 - participants and selection criteria

- Youth from different marginalized background - four key characteristics of four selected districts
  - Bandarban: Ethnic communities in hill districts
  - Cumilla: advanced in education but high level of gender based violence
  - Faridpur: Diversity – culturally rich, but Char/river erosion and sex workers rights issues are critical
  - Khulna: Climate change vulnerability
- Boys and girls in education, out of school (unemployed, employed, married), economic hardship, social exclusion, and geographic exclusion including gender, ethnicity and disabilities etc.
- Willingness to participate, have a voluntary attitude, and keen to learn and empower themselves through leadership development and community participation



### YAR Bangladesh Timeline



As part of the preparation

- CAMPE staff received capacity building support from ASPBAE and other regional and global platform.
- Prepared concept note in Bangla, and Prepared time plan, partner's engagement plan was developed and consulted with the potential local partners and reviewed the guideline provided by the ASPBAE team, and translated the instrument in Bangla, and created a Google Form to coordinate the data collection process systematically other desk top preparation, extract google form, draft module and prepare other documents.

In July 2021, a total of 4 communities were selected in 2 working areas through the PNGOs of CAMPE. After selection of community 15 youths were selected from per community (4 community from 2 district) primarily by verifying the demand in consultation with the local people and youth. Giving preference to youths aged 15-25 years considering their age for involvement in activities. Involve youth from underprivileged sections of society (at least 50%) in activities (gender, minority, poverty, social exclusion, geographically disadvantaged, persons with disabilities, out-of-school youth, child labor and child marriage, etc.). Finally 20 youths from each community has been engaged on data collection process.

## **2.00: Strengthen understanding of SDG4, Right to Education, youth leadership, and YAR-Capacity building workshop**

Two days long Capacity building workshop were organized each community. The topic covered in capacity building initiative include deeper understating of SDGs, SDG4, human rights-based approach to education, leadership qualities. The issues also included the holistic development of youth, promoting 21st Century Skills, addressing adversity factors in education, understanding demographic dividend, and encouraging youth leadership and youth-led action research Metadata, and SDG4 Localisation, This included basic education indicators and thematic issues like human rights, gender equality, cultural diversity, ESD, and GCED (global citizenship), climate change, education in emergency. Also, focus on the Sendai framework, Charlevoix declaration, the charter for change, CRPD, etc. to understand in international commitments on reducing climate change and disaster risk projects girls' rights, and rights of the indigenous people and persons with disabilities, etc. and how to incorporate in our SDG4.7 advocacy also Shared Research and action research, methodology, community level resource mapping and identifying some key issues of the youths, identify stakeholders - right holders & duty bearers, stakeholder mapping with spheres of interest and influence, development of questionnaire for youth-led action research.



These sessions were organized by two member organizations of CAMPE, namely Darpan (Cumilla), Bandarban (BNKS) as summarized below:

District	Division	Co-host	Date of the Event	Number of Participants	Girls/women	Proportion
Cumilla	Chattogram	Darpon	02-03 Nov 2021	37	22	69.45%
Bandarban	Chattogram	BNKS	23-24 January	38	15	39.47%
				75	37	49.33%

### Major Findings /Achievements and Recommendations from the Capacity Building Workshop

- Have idea concepts of SDGs, SDG4, human rights-based approach to education, promoting 21<sup>st</sup> century skills, leadership qualities;
- build capacity about problem identification, stakeholders identification and quessnaire development;
- Most of them it was 1<sup>st</sup> training that's way they feel empowered;
- build Capacity of selected youths on the youth-led action research methodology;
- Get opportunity to meet Youths from different areas of Bandarban district;
- At the end of the training, the youth became involved in research work and at the district and upazila level, they also inspired to do advocacy with government agencies and people's representatives;
- Create opportunity to participate the Youths at divisional and national levels workshops;
- Need to organize the refresher about the YAR.

### 3.00 Conduct YAR at the community level

In Cumilla district 20 no of youths (14 no of girls and 6 no of boys) and in Bandarban district collected 18 no of youths from data 2 no of community. They entry data in google form.



In data collection phases youths were engaged in instrument development, field testing and collection of data from local community, Workshop for data analysis and summarize field findings Community consultation for data validation ect. All the activity was performed by youths.

## Total Respondents of the Survey

Cumilla total 148, Female: 17, Male: 131

Bandarban: 150, Female: 56, Male: 94

Total: 298, Female: 73, Male: 225

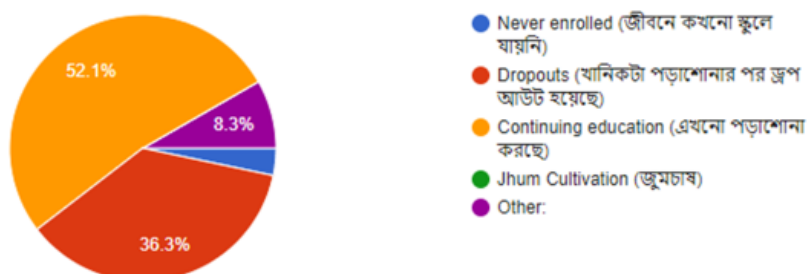
Total Youths Engage in the YAR: 26

Percentage of girls and women: 32.44%

## Participants and Coverage



## Educational Status of the Respondents



### Reason of Dropouts:

- Poverty and Family Hardship
- Early Marriage
- Higher household expenditure for education
- COVID-19
- Inadequate job opportunity for Youth with basic education

### Some significant issues:

- Continuity of education is challenging due to economic factors and social pressure
  - Loose jobs of work
  - Household economic condition
  - Early marriage, child labourer
  -
- School closure
  - Lack of household support and non-participation in online class

- Higher cost of education
- Inadequate access to education
  - Internet connectivity, mobile, network, broadband connection ect.
  - Access to device: computer, laptop, connecting devise;
  - Data charge-affordability or right of the student
- Geographical diversity and ethnic identity
- Sex, location (mainland and hills), household economy, employment and asset base

## Findings

- In the situation of COVID School was closure for 544 days;
- Education has been disrupted across the country - while some of the city's most privileged families have access to online education, most of the disadvantaged families have not been able to take opportunity of the online classes;
- Upgraded to the next classes without annual examination in 2020-learning loss remains;
- Assignment are given at the end of the year;
- Financial crisis for losing job of the household head;
- Not receiving any financial support from others;
- Family members being effected from COVID
- Lack of treatment and food;
- Causes of COVID feeling lonely and shocked;
- Income has been stopped;
- Dropped out from education, feeling burden by family.

## 4. Advocacy and Follow-up interventions-

### 4.1: Sub-National Level Sharing on finding of YAR 2021

Two sub-national level sharing was organized at Cumilla and Bandarban district on 28 February 2022. A total of 54+36 have participated (female: 25+10, Male 29+26, 38.88 percentage of female) in the session.

District	Division	Co-host	Date of the event	Number of Participants	Girls/ women	Proportion
Cumilla	Chattogram	DARPAN	28 Feb 2022	54	25	46.55%
Bandarban	Chattogram	BNKS	28 Feb 2022	36	10	27.77%
Total				90	35	38.88%

Deputy Director, youth Development department of Cumilla chief guest of the event, shared the activities carried out by the youth development for the youth Loan program one of these. He encouraged youth to prepare themselves as small entrepreneurs by receive training and collect loan from youth development department and others bank like NRBC. Youths reflected that Consideration of COVID-19 the age limit of employment can be increased from 30 to 35 years.



Upazila Assistant Youth Development Officer Cumilla was the chief guest of the event. People can benefit from the use of information technology

Upazila Assistant Youth Development officer Bandarban was the chief

The participants were government officials, youths, women small entrepreneur, local political representatives, teachers, development workers, doctor, journalist and representatives from host organization

### Major Challenges of the YAR 2021 at Cumilla and Bandarban district were

- Financial crisis as a result of losing one's job or the head of the family;
- Not receiving any financial of relief assistance from others;
- Effected from COVID others members of family;
- Lack of treatment and food;
- Being tensed and feeling lonely because of pandemic;
- Because of school closure it is difficult to continue study: have no access in internet;
- Due to stop/closure of study it seemed the burden of family;

## 4.2: Advocacy and Follow-up interventions- National Consultation on Youth-led Action Research- COVID 19 Recovery focusing on Marginalized Youth

CAMPE organized a National level Consultation on Youth-led Action Research on 23 February 2022 at the YWCA auditorium. Ehsan-e-Elahi , Secretary, Ministry of Labour and employment graces as chief guest of the session. Sunil Gangavane Youth Coordinator, Asia South Pacific Association for Basic and Adult Education (ASPBAE), India, and Cecilia (Thea) Victoria Soriano, Regional Policy and Advocacy Coordinator Asia South Pacific Association for Basic and Adult Education were present as guest speakers. The session was chaired by Rasheda K. Choudhury executive director of CAMPE and Moderated by K.M Enamul Hoque, Deputy Director of CAMPE. The participants were young



volunteer researchers from Comilla, Bandarban, Faridpur and Khulna districts. Besides, the youth representatives involved in the action research conducted earlier in Sylhet, Meherpur, Natore, Manikganj and Khagrachhari districts along with organization representatives. The session was conducted through hybrid mode. 15 no participants were in virtually. Total 60 (female-24, male: 36, proportion: 40%) person were participated the session direct and virtually.

#### **Mahitun Islam, Cumilla**

- Child labor and child marriage have increased in our area. Many students have dropped out due to school closures during the Corona period.
- Raise awareness in the family and society about child marriage
- Provide devices for online classes and increase net speed.
- Drop out children should be brought back to class. Those who are studying need more help. And those who want to be engaged in work must also be trained and made efficient.

#### **Rabeya Akter Bristi, Faridpur**

- Corona problem has affected all over the world, Bangladesh too. In addition, river erosion is an ongoing problem in our area. Poverty has increased due to corona, child marriage is taking place.
- A permanent solution is needed to prevent erosion.
- If we want to tackle poverty, we have to create employment, child marriage is happening.
- Arrangements should be made for education and training of students with special needs.

#### **Ranjit Munda, Koyra, Khulna**

- Coastal areas also have river erosion in our area, natural disasters happen every year. Child marriage and child labor are on the rise. Children do risky work in brick kilns.
- Arrangements should be made to make the embankment sustainable.
- Grants have to be provided during disasters.
- To stop child marriage and child labor. Alternative employment growth initiatives need to be taken for them.
- Development of communication system.

#### **Eti Choudhury, Bandarban**

- Educational institutions were closed during the Kovid period. There was a network problem. Teachers and students cannot run laptops and presentations. Inaccessible path / area in the mountains. So children cannot go to school. Lack of subject teachers.
- Provide technical training related to education.
- Need to set up a school nearby
- Subject wise teachers should be appointed.

#### **Joba Tripura, Khagrachhory**

- The number of teachers is less. One teacher has to teach all subjects.

- The number of teachers should be increased.

#### **Kazi Saifunnahar, manikgonj**

- One of our problems is river erosion. Primary and secondary schools are falling prey to river erosion. Students are getting addicted to drugs due to school closure.
- Permanent measures need to be taken to prevent river erosion.
- Employment and online classes require uninterrupted internet connection to get rid of drug addiction.

#### **Manim Bin Asif, Natore**

- Waterlogged during monsoon. Then school-college is closed. It is possible to travel by boat. But parents do not want to go to school by boat to cut costs.
- Boats can be officially arranged for school-college travel during this disaster.

#### **Shirin Akter, Maherpur**

- Our child labor has increased. Now the cost of education has increased. Due to this poor families cannot afford this. Uses children. Family relocations are occurring due to climate change. The family is not able to admit the children by transfer. They are being associated with risky work
- We have become enterprising and stopped child marriage. So far we have stopped 18 child marriages. Everyone should be aware and enterprising about this.
- Child laborers need to be trained.
- Child labor will be stopped if the families of child laborers are brought under the safety net.

#### **Sanit Sharma, Moulvibazar**

- We are people of different nationalities. I live in a hilly area. There are primary schools in hilly areas. Secondary school is far away. So the girls dropped out of school. Many agricultural workers are losing their labor due to the use of agricultural technology. They are cutting bamboo, destroying the environment;
- Secondary schools should be set up in hilly areas. Then child marriage will decrease;
- Arranging hostels in secondary schools will reduce child marriage;
- Employment measures need to be taken for unemployed agriculturists due to use of agricultural technology.

#### **Md. Ehsan\_E-Elahi, Secretary, Ministry of Labour and employment**

There are no skilled people available for research. The data collected by the researchers and the results of the research are useful in planning. Every year 2 million young people in this country are able to enter the world of work. But only 10-12 lakh young people get jobs, the rest are unemployed. We also have 50-60 lakh workers in the informal sector in the country. Overall, there

are about 6 crore workers. Our main job is to take care of these workers as well. Another big job we should have is employment. In fact, there is no progress on employment. Another department is being opened to work on employment. The policy has been made for him, it will be passed in the cabinet. This problem will be solved when the ministry takes initiative to create a department to work on employment.

Hon'ble Prime Minister has given impetus during the Covid-19 emergency. We are ahead in many indicators of SDG. The students have dropped out. We couldn't hold them. He said that he could not go to them for two long years. Even then we have come a long way. How many millions of us use the Internet! How many poor people use smartphones! Even in poor families, smartphones have gone into the hands of children In each case, we have seized it, despite obstacles we can scarcely imagine." Unemployment is rising, there are many programs to increase skills. Education is free up to the degree of girls. Free books are provided.. So many books are not given anywhere in the world. Now every ward has primary school. He has less secondary school than that. The Ministry of Education can take initiative in this regard Anne is losing her job due to mechanical reasons. We are worried about this. The government is working on this. FGD will have to be implemented in 2030. There is risky child labor. I have gazetted by identifying these. 43 sectors are at risk. We have taken initiative to free the children from risky in the project of elimination of risky child labor. Arrangements will be made for their primary education and training. I have taken initiative to stop child labor by forming committees at upazila and district level. Through all these initiatives we will be able to stop child labor.

We will evaluate your recommendations accordingly. We are looking at you. Without you, our future is dark.

Concluding Remarks by the Chair

**Rasheda K. Choudhury**

There are many who are representing indigenous and marginalized peoples. Member organizations have been added here. Thank them. Greetings to all.

We have to live with Corona. For this you have to follow the hygiene rules and wear a mask. We have to create employment. Many young entrepreneurs are emerging from the grassroots. I am also working on such a sector, those who are being deprived of the benefits of labor, they are domestic workers. They have been left out under the labor law. They have to be brought under the law. He drew the attention of the Secretary for their recognition.

## **Key Recommendations from YAR 2021**

- Strengthening education recovery programme
- Enhance support to ICT-based teaching learning programme including teachers development and support to most marginalize
- Reduce cost of education

- Improve school to work transition
- Create more jobs for the most marginalized
- Improve the social safety-net programmes

Prepared By  
**Shamson Naher Koli**

The End