

EXTENT AND MAGNITUDE OF URBAN POVERTY: CHALLENGES AND WAY FORWARD

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INTRODUCTION

Urban poverty is a growing phenomenon. Rural-urban migration for seeking income is the main cause of the growth of low-income settlement. Transformation from one type of socio-economic setting to another creates not only the adaptation problem but losses control over the benefits of social networks and access to government services which are exclusively designed for rural populace. There is no disagreement among the researchers and policy makers that urban poverty offsets the development gains of the country. Nevertheless, according to security experts, there are adequate reasons to allude to sprawling slums as the dens, hideouts of outlaws and hub for anti-social activities and drugs. Pervasive natures of crime, violence and prevalence of potential security threats in those slums might transform into destabilize the “social security”.

Absence of a comprehensive urbanization policy has been identified as one of the major policy lacks to address emerging challenges. Added dimensions of poverty such as lack of access to urban utilities, exposure to poverty and degenerated sanitation and environmental hazards, potentials of infliction with communicable diseases further portray a complex and bleak picture of the trajectory of life. Although researchers in policy discussion frequently indicates to “less stability of urban environment,” while draws upon the conclusions such as resilience, flexibility and more adaptability to dire conditions they are exposed to.

It is clear that growing urban poverty poses challenge to attain the goals relating to Millennium Development Goals (MDG) and social development priorities. From this point of view, in-depth research initiatives should be considered important to capture various dimensions of urban poverty.

A combination of socio-economic, political and demographic factors is responsible for this. The growth in the magnitude of urban economy, change in the scale and nature of economic activity and distribution of income between regions and among classes, demographic transition and change in the scale and nature of governance are likely to be influenced by rapid urbanization and urban settlements patterns in Bangladesh.

URBAN POVERTY

Definition: There is no consensus on a definition of urban poverty. Conventional economic definitions use income or consumption complemented by a range of other social indicators such as life expectancy, infant mortality, nutrition, the proportion of the household budget spent on food, literacy, school enrolment rates, access to health clinics or drinking water, to classify poor groups against a common index of material welfare.

However, Centre for Urban Studies (CUS) in 1996 gave a working definition of urban poor as: “The urban poor are people who cannot afford to meet the basic needs requirements with their own income.” Basic needs requirements include food or nutrition, clothing, primary health care, education and shelter. The items that meet the basic needs are, nutrition – 2122 kilo calories as minimum requirements, clothing – at least 2 set, health – real access to primary health care facilities, education - access and ability to obtain primary education or vocational training with literacy, shelter – an independent room which is strong enough to withstand weather elements and which provides minimum decent privacy with access to drinking water and toilet facilities.

In urban context there have some specific characteristics for poverty. They are as follows:

- a. After food major expenditure on house rent or health or on bribe in case of pavement dwellers;
- b. Live in environmentally hazardous condition;
- c. More prone to water borne, infectious or respiratory diseases;
- d. Lack of access to drinking water and toilets;
- e. Lack of Day Care Centre impacts their livelihoods more severely;
- f. Adolescent girls are more vulnerable to early marriage and sexual exploitation;
- g. Face constant threat of eviction and harassment in their work situation (esp. hawkers, beggars, sex workers);
- h. Eviction makes them more vulnerable and many become homeless and stay on pavements.

Present Trend of Urban Poverty in Bangladesh

In the recent past, the incidence of overall poverty has reduced to a great extent. The following table illustrates the fact.

Table 1: Present Poverty trend of Bangladesh

	Upper poverty line		Lower poverty line	
	2000	2010	2000	2010
National	48.9	31.5	34.3	17.6
Urban	35.2	21.3	19.9	7.7
Rural	52.3	35.2	37.9	21.1

Source: HIES 2000 and 2010; Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics

However, despite the reduction of urban poverty, the overall poverty in urban area is still widespread due to various factors.

Urbanization

Urbanization can be defined as being the process of becoming urban, moving to cities, changing from agriculture to other pursuits common to cities and changing and corresponding changes of behaviour patterns.¹ The rural urban migration that leads to urbanization in Bangladesh represents the transfer of poverty from rural to urban areas. Most of the slum dwellers come to urban areas in search of living.

Unplanned growth of towns and cities is another cause of the growth of the slum areas. There is a legislation banning unauthorized construction in urban areas but this is not strictly followed. So, whenever, people find a vacant government plot, they construct thatches and start living there.²

Bangladesh is a rapidly urbanizing country where urban base has expanded rapidly from 7.6% to nearly 25% between 1970 and 2005. With a population of 14.3 million, Dhaka mega city currently ranks as the world's ninth largest city³ and it is likely to be world's second largest urban agglomeration by 2020.⁴ Dhaka district has the highest level of urbanization. Dhaka is a low income city with large numbers of poor when compared with most mega cities of the world. In a recent newspaper report, Dhaka has been rated as the least liveable location of the world among 140 cities surveyed by Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU). The ratings are based on 30 factors, across five broad categories -- stability, healthcare, culture and environment, education and infrastructure.⁵

1. Clyde Mitchell, "Urbanisation, Detribalisation and Stabilisation in Southern Africa: A problem of Definition Measurements" in *Social Implication of Industrialisation and Urbanisation in Africa, South of Sahara*, UNESCO, Paris, 1957. Cited by Mohammad Habibur Rahman, *Urbanization and Urban Social Service in BD*. P.20.
2. Rahman, M. H., 2002. *Urbanization and Urban Social Service in Bangladesh*, Dhaka: Ananya Publishers. p.36
3. World Urbanization Prospects: The 2009 Revision, UN.
4. World Bank 2007, Cited by Nicola Banks.
5. The daily Star, *Dhaka is least liveable city in the world*, 15 Aug 2012.

Trend of Urbanization in Bangladesh

Trend of urban growth in Bangladesh for last one century, shows a very slow and retarded urban growth for Bangladesh. In Bangladesh the rate of urbanization is being consistently over 5 per cent since 1974, and even up-to 7 per cent in some years.⁶ The large number of urban population since 1981 is due to the definitional change of urban area in those censuses. The high urban growth rate from 1981 through 2011 was due to the extended definition of urban area in 1981. Though the urban population has increased from 2.4% in 1901 to 28% in 2011, the exponential growth rate indicates much slower growth for the said period, from 1.4 during 1901-11, it increased to 3.2 during 1991-2011. The overall trend is curvilinear, unstable and periodically fluctuating. It reflects both global and internal dynamism as well as statistical manipulation by the politicized administration of a peripheral state.

Table 2: Trend of Urbanization in Bangladesh

Census year	Total population	Urban population	Percent urban	Variation	Exponential growth rate
1901	28,928,000	702,035	2.43	-	-
1911	31,555,000	807,024	2.56	14.95	1.39
1921	33,254,000	878,480	2.64	8.85	0.85
1931	35,604,000	1,073,489	3.02	22.2	2
1941	41,997,000	1,537,244	3.66	43.2	3.59
1951	42,063,000	1,819,773	4.33	18.38	1.69
1961	50,840,000	2,640,726	5.19	45.11	3.72
1974	71,479,000	6,273,602	8.78	137.57	6.66
1981	87,120,000	13,228,163	15.18	110.85	10.66
1991	106,314,000	20,872,204	19.63	57.79	4.56
2001	123,851,120	28,605,200	23.1	37.05	3.15
2011	158,570,535	44,399,750	28	21.21	3.2

Source: Government of Bangladesh, Statistical year book 2010 Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics

Causes of Urban Poverty

Urban poverty is not a detached matter. All of the physical, mental and socio economic condition are interrelated with this poverty situation. When people stay in an unemployed situation then they can not start business or house because

6. Islam, N., 1997. Urbanization, Migration And Development In Bangladesh: Recent Trends And Emerging Issue.

of credit. And this situation leads them not to have an adequate housing and forced them to live an unhygienic condition that causes a poor health and poor education. This entire poor situation makes sense of insecurity, isolation and disempowerment.⁷ There are various reasons of urban poverty. Professor Nazrul Islam identifies some of the reasons of increase of urban poverty. Those are as follows:

- a. Natural disaster like flood, cyclone, tidal bore and river erosion;
- b. Increase of population disproportionate to limited resources;
- c. Low index of human development like illiteracy, health, skill etc;
- d. Low productivity;
- e. Lack of policy support and development programme for poor.

FIELD STUDY AREAS

There are about 4966 slums of Dhaka city.⁸ The slums are widespread in Dhaka city. For this study, 5 slums are selected for primary survey in order to gather and correlate some present scenario with the available data of secondary source in respect of urban poverty in different locations of Dhaka. The selected slums are:

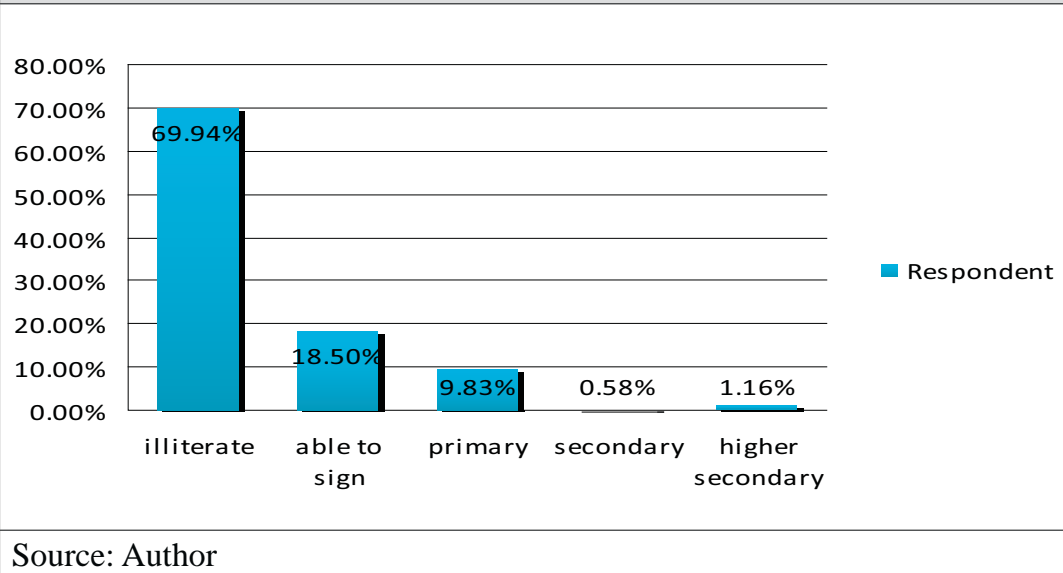
- a. Begun Tila slum (Mirpur-12).
- b. Rayer Bazar Slum (Over the western dam of Dhaka)
- c. Slum adjacent to Kamalapur Railway Station.
- d. Karail Slum.
- e. Slums around Tejgaon Rail Station.

Demographic Characteristics of the Study Area:

Educational Status. This field of study reflect very poor scenario of educational status of underprivileged society. Around 70% people are illiterate here. A little number of slum dwellers are able to sign and passed primary school. Despite the govt provides free primary education, the slum people are not able to avail the scope of the opportunity.

7. Deniz Baharoglu and Christine Kessides *Urban Poverty*, Chapter 16.

8. Ishtiaque, Ahmed & Sezan Mahumud, Malik., *Migration objectives and their fulfilment: A Micro Study of the Rural-Urban Migrations of the Slums of Dhaka City*. www.ukm.my/geografia/images/upload/4.geografia-2011-4-Asif-bangladesh-english--editedfinal1.pdf [Accessed on 19 Aug 2012].

Figure 1: Educational status of unprivileged society

Reason of Discontinuation of Study. Most of the slum dwellers are not able to continue their education and the drop out rate is very high. From the study, some interrelated causes for discontinuation of study were found. 50% of the sample directly indicate poverty as a reason of discontinuation of their study. Early marriage is the next important reason for discontinuation of study that occurs with about 38% of the respondent.

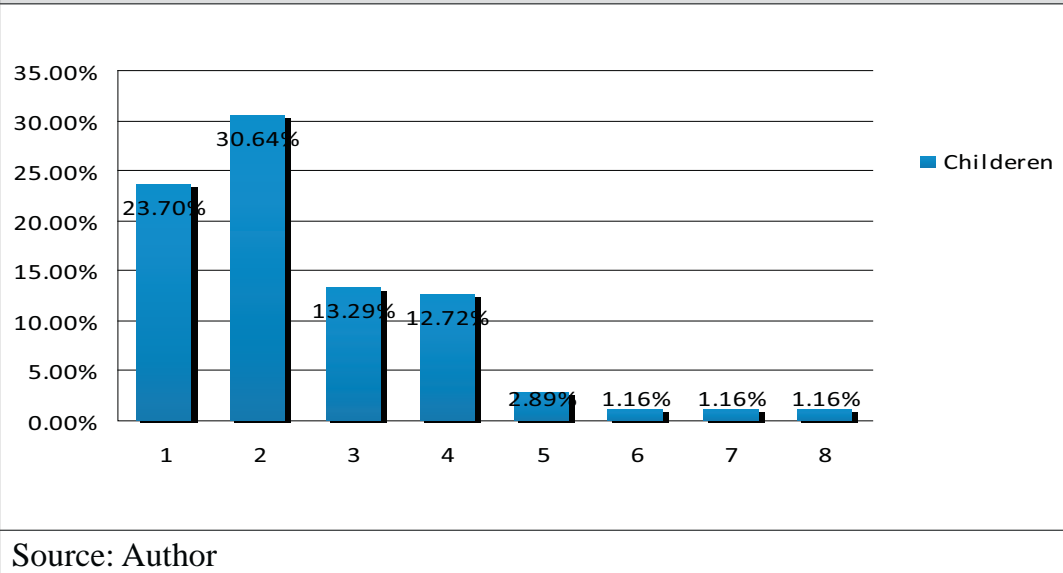
Socio - Economic Characteristics

Respondent Occupation. From the study we reveal that majority of the slum dwellers constitute day labour (39.88%). The next higher category of profession in order of percentage are domestic help and garment worker (22.54% and 14.45% respectively). Informal sector dominates the livelihood of slum dwellers.

Reason of Migration. Study reveals that Dhaka attracts between 300,000 to 400,000 new migrants each year (World Bank 2007). Both push and pull factors – such as lack of job opportunities or land erosion – have been the main contributing factors to migration (Opel 2000; Siddiqui, Ahmed et al 2000; Islam 2005). In this study also we can find almost the similar scenario for the reason of migration. Majority of the people migrated to Dhaka for economic reasons like financial crisis (67%). A substantial portion (15%) of people migrated due to river erosion. Unemployment accounts for (6%) but aspirations for high income constitute only (1%). It is important to note that majority people migrated from Barisal (19%) and second large percentage people migrated from Rangpur (15%).

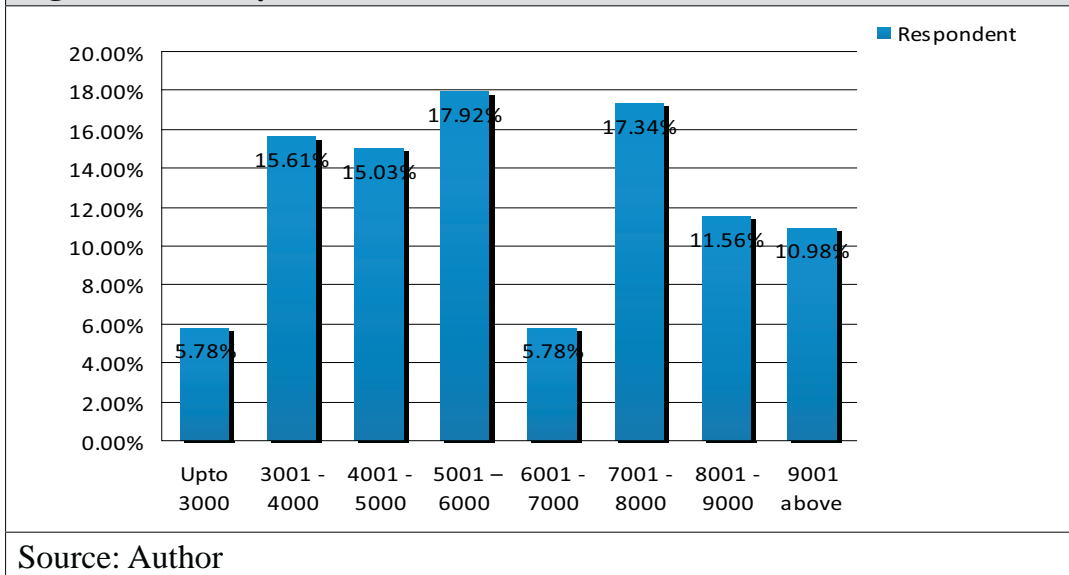
Family Structure. Urban poor are perceived to be basically not very attentive about their family size but this study reveals different. Large family size are not very significant. Around 54% family have only 1 to 2 children. 25% of households have 3 to 4 children.

Figure 2: Number of child in a family



Status of Children: In urban slum area children are mostly deprived of their rights. Because of poverty most of the parents are forced to send their children to work. Only 39% child go to school and rests are engaged in other jobs. But it is good to see that there are growing concern in parents for giving education to their children. 83% of respondents desire to send their child to school. This is very good sign in terms of their resilience in the slum life.

Monthly Income. Income is one of the most common factor to measure poverty. Through the study, monthly income of the respondents found to vary from Tk. 3000 to Tk. 9000. 5.78% urban slum dwellers earn only up to Tk. 3000. More than 54% of them earn up to Tk. 6000 only. This income is not enough to support their family. A significant portion (28.9%) of the respondents earn Tk. 7000 to Tk. 9000.

Figure 3: Monthly Income

Expenditure of Food. In the previous study, it has been revealed that there are high percentage of earnings spent on food. In this study also, it is found that, people spend nearly about 70% of their income on food. Mean food expenditure is Tk. 3675 of the respondents slum dwellers. As their income is very limited most of the times they face crisis in this issue and most of them (80%) take loan to cope with this situation which obviously affect their regular livelihood.

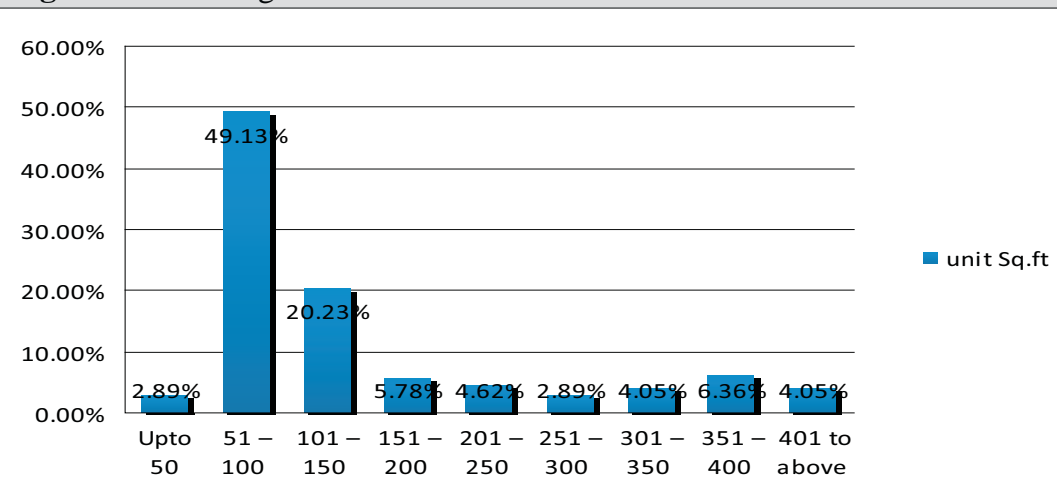
Expenditure for House Rent. Rent structure of slum area is generally very high compared to other areas of the city. For a dwelling unit of the size of 51 to 100 sq.ft, the rent is about Tk.1500, meaning that per sq.ft rent is Tk.15. By contrast, for example, Now in Mirpur DOHS. Average house rent is Tk. 30,000 (±) for a house of the size of around 2000 sq. ft i.e. per sq. ft rent is Tk. 15, same as of a slum. It means that that house rent in slum areas is proportionately very high compared to the availability of basic amenities and overall consideration in respect of standard of living. 44% slum dwellers falls in that category. Only 27% pay below Tk. 1000. Another 24% pay between Tk. 1500 – 1999. Some of them (5%) pay 2000 or more for house rent.

Savings. Urban poor have difficulty in savings. After paying for food and house rent, the amount of money they have are not sufficient. In the study it is found that only 39% of them can save some of their income while 61% have no money to save. The same phenomenon i.e. lack of savings has been seen during the earlier study as well. It means that the situation in regard to income and savings has not improved. This condition lead them to future insucurity of livelihood.

Status of Accommodation

Dwelling Unit. Dwelling unit size is the most important factor that represents accommodation status. In urban slum area poor people live in a very congested area. This scenario also reflects at our study. Almost 50% of them live in a dwelling unit of the size of only 51-100 sq feet. Another 20.23% of them are living in a dwelling unit of 100-150 sq feet. Other categories of dwelling unit size are not very much significant. 88% of the total household occupy only a single room to live. 9% use two rooms to live.

Figure 4: Dwelling Unit Size



Source: Author

Water, Sanitation and Hygiene

Water, sanitation and hygiene scenario in the slum areas are not satisfactory, because most of the people do not have access to good sanitation and hygienic environment. Only 8% people drink boil water whereas 92% do not. 18% use hygienic toilet⁹ facilities and other 82% use unhygienic toilet¹⁰ facility (Chart-23); among them only 9% get the facility to use their own toilet and rest 91% common or shared toilet. In addition, some (33%) had to pay for the toilet in addition to their house rent that takes a toll on their income.

Moreover solid waste disposal condition of these areas are also in a very critical situation. Only 36% use dustbin whereas 32% leave solid waste on the road and 23% put solid waste in the drain which are the potent reasons of other health and environmental hazard in the urban area.

9. Hygienic toilet refers to a toilet from where no bad smell comes out, excreta are closed and no fly can enter.

10. Unhygienic toilet refers to a toilet that lacks any or all conditions of hygienic toilet.

Hazard and Risk

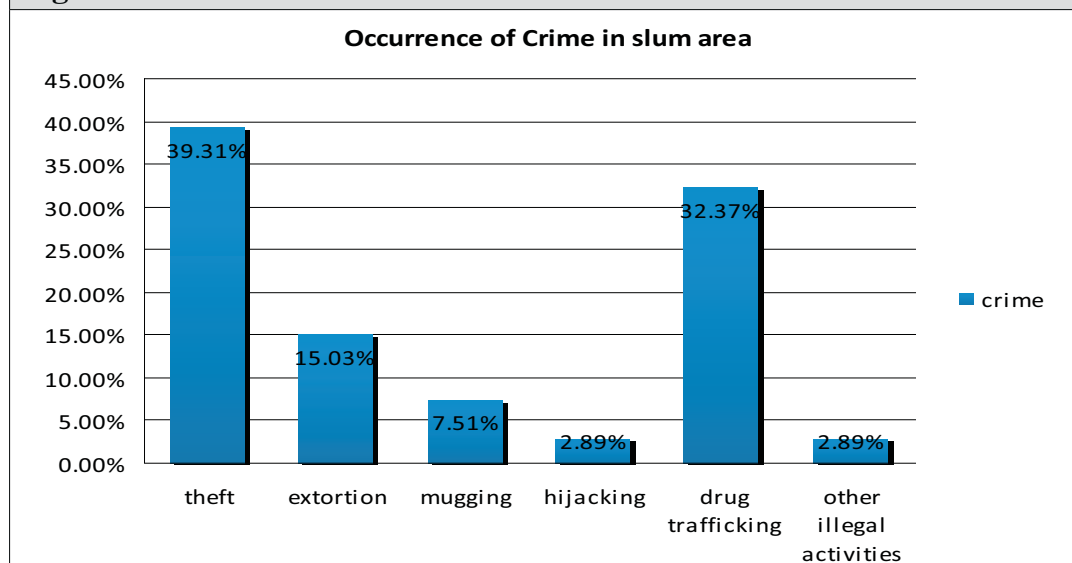
Eviction. A significant portion of poor people (37%) have faced eviction from their slum in last 5 years where 88% of the evicted peoples had to live in public spaces to cope with the situation and only 12% could shift to other places. Moreover 48% peoples still live in the slums with the fear of eviction.

Flood. Though floods are not very regular event in this metropolitan area, 36% still suffer from flood events regularly which mainly occur by waterlogging in moonson time. They mainly suffer from this hazard as they live in low land and flood flow land.

Fire Hazard. Though fire hazards are known as a regular hazardous event for slum, only 22% of the respondents faced this event. And other 78% of the respondents have never faced this event.

Crime. Though crime relates primarily to law and civic security issues, but magnitude of this problem presently has turned to be a hazard now. As far as the type and magnitude of the crime events are concerned, there were theft (39.31%), drug trafficking (32.37%), extortion (15.03%), mugging (7.51%), hijacking (2.89%) and so on. Moreover 63% respondents replied that crime incidents are increasing day by day.

Figure 5: Occurrence of Crime in slum area



Source: Author

Now-a-days the problem of sexual harassment is becoming a major concern. Most of the respondents (58%) said that their families have face this problem. According to the information of Rapid Action Battalion (RAB), it is also clear that slums are a major source of crime which has a negative impact on other neighbouring areas of the city. Slums are a major places of drug trafficking. In the area of RAB-2 (Mohammadpur area), during the period of June- 2011 to July- 2012, a total of 537 persons were arrested for various crimes; of which about 10% belong to the slum/ Bihari Camp area.

Social Safety

Under the Ministry of Social Welfare, there are programmes like Urban Community Development (UCD). Besides, there are policy strategy and different poverty reduction programme those are run by government under social safety net, but none of the programmes found to be functioning in the surveyed slums. Some NGOs are running their activity on social safety net like micro credit (45%), education (24%), health programme (16%) and sanitation (15%).

Health and Nutrition

Knowledge about Primary Health Care Issues. Most of the poor are very much conscious about the general diseases like diarrhoea (71%) and other communicable diseases (83%). But unfortunately they do not drink boiled water. Only 8% people drink boiled water. They mostly know how to prepare ORS (63%). But in case of complex diseases like malaria only 27% are aware about the symptoms and in case of HIV 62% have no idea about it or its prevention methods.

General Health Care Service Facilities. Most of the people get easy access to NGO health facilities (51%) and local doctor (44%), Therefore, they mostly go there. Only 4% go to government hospital and 1% to community hospitals. It is, therefore, evident that due to non availability of government hospital, slum people go to NGO health facilities and local doctors. Scarcity of govt hospital is an issue that needs to be taken care of.

Knowledge of Slum Dwellers about Hygienic Issues. It is a very good sign that the slum dwellers are more knowledgeable and aware about some of the hygienic issues and they put into practices in their daily lives. The following table illustrates such testimony.

Table 3: Knowledge of slum dwellers about hygienic issues

SL No	Hygiene Issue	Knowledge		Practice	
		Know	Don't know	Yes	No
1	Hand wash with soap/ ash before eating	95.95%	4.05%	95.95%	4.05%
2	Hand wash with soap/ ash before feeding children	91.91%	8.09%	91.91%	8.09%
3	Hand wash with soap/ash after defecation	68.79%	31.21%	68.79%	31.21%
4.	Hand wash before food preparation	24.28%	75.72%	24.28%	75.72%
5	Keeping food under cover	80.35%	19.65%	80.35%	19.65%
6	Cutting nail regularly	64.16%	35.84%	64.16%	35.84%
7.	Go to Latrine with shoes	96.53%	3.47%	96.53%	3.47%
Source: Author					

But there are still some worrying factors that need to be taken care of. From the above table we find that almost 1/3 of the sample (32.32%) don't know that they have to wash their hands with soap after defecation, 3/4 of the sample (75.72%) is unaware of washing hands before food preparation and 1/3 of the people (35.84%) don't know that they have to cut their nails regularly and they don't put into practice that also in their daily lives.

Impact of Urban Poverty

Impact of urban poverty is multifaceted. Due to poverty, urban poor are unable to meet very basic needs of their life. Combination of the study of the secondary and primary data, it is found that out of many important elements that have serious impact on the life and livelihood of urban poor those are enumerated below:

Housing Problem. Urban poverty accelerates the existing housing problem of the large cities of our country. Population increase and low income of a huge portion of population makes this problem more acute. As a result, poor people of urban areas are forced to live in miserable condition at slums in a very congested space or live beside road and rail line or under open air with minimum possible

civic amenities. It is also found that their houses are often flooded by rain. In addition, According to UN, around 3 million people of Dhaka live in slum. A 1995 study on 10 cities of Bangladesh reveals that 9% of its population lives in illegal slums and in Dhaka this number is 18%.

Employment Problem. As we have gathered from conceptual analysis that rapid urbanization creates new employment opportunity, but gradual population increase, illiteracy, unskilled manpower and over all mismanagement and corruption in various sectors makes the urban unemployment problem acute. Owing to such situation, this research reveals that a bulk portion of the slum people engaged in day labour and domestic aid. In our country total 2.6% (BBS-2010) of labour force is unemployed and most of them are from urban area.

Lack of Education Facility. Most of the urban poor people keep their children away from going to school because of poverty and some due to early marriage. And the evident outcome is that the people of this class remain illiterate. Primary data reveals that 70% people of slum area are illiterate. But as mentioned before that a growing aspiration is prevalent in urban slum people (83%) to send their children to school.

Criminal Activities. With the increase of poor population at urban area, the incidence of criminal or anti-social activities has also increased substantially. Problems of poverty like unemployment, illiteracy, decline of morality, frustration, rapid population increase etc. contribute to spread of urban criminal activity. Originally drug addiction, drug trafficking, mugging, theft, violence against women, rape and other offence related activity are common scenario of urban poor people's life. This study also reveals similar situation of criminal and anti-social activities.

Spread of Diseases. Generally, outbreak of different diseases is very much common to urban poor. From the field survey it is found that about 47.6% of the surveyed households suffered from diarrhoea and 51.7% suffered to other diseases.

Marital Problem & Increase of Sexual Crime. Incidence of early marriage is a problem in urban poor people. From the primary survey we find that 38% respondents left school due to early marriage. Sexual abuse and sexual crime also exist in this class of people. As we have found that women (58%) are subjected to sexual harassment. Prostitution is another problem that impacts the life of the slum people.

Increase of Child Labour. Natural growth of children can get hampered by poverty. Mainly most of the poor children have to engage with labour instead of being educated. Primary data disclosed that 31% of children work in garments. BBS conducted survey represent that around 3.2 million child labours (almost 43%) include within the total number of children involves with economic activity. The UNICEF supported study marked 430 types of child labour in Bangladesh and most of them are in urban area. Originally the incidence of child labour is because of the prevalence of the poverty in urban area.

Problems of Access to Urban Facilities. Urban poor are deprived from most of the urban facilities. To this effect, we find that there is not enough sewerage and drainage facilities, medical services are insufficient, roads are inaccessible, and garbage and rubbish disposal facilities are not good at all.

Challenges of Urban Poverty

Urban poverty creates a complex dynamics along with the host of challenges. Besides there are various challenges that the government and policy makers would face in order to address the urban poverty. From the study, following challenges of urban poverty are identified :

- a. Creation of Employment.
- b. Controlling Criminal and Anti Social Activities.
- c. Access to Urban Facilities.
- d. Providing Housing for all.
- e. Access to Education.
- f. Access to Healthcare.
- g. Scarcity of Resources.
- h. Mass Transportation.
- j. Unequal Distribution of Wealth and Social Change.

RECOMMENDATIONS

In view of study of secondary and primary data and challenges drawn previously, followings are the recommendations made in alleviating urban poverty:

Community Development Programme (CDP). Community Development is a term applied to leaders, activists, involving citizens and professionals to improve various social aspects of local communities. CDP aims to empower individuals and groups of people by providing them with the skills they need to effect change in their own communities. Under this programme, slum dwellers

may be organised for various training programme, providing education and run awareness programme on various social issues and organised them to develop cooperative for savings etc.

Housing Assistant Programme. In order for rehabilitation of the slum poor people, low cost housing/flat may be made in government khas land and distribute to the slum dwellers in long term instalment.

No Eviction without Arranging Alternative Site for Resettlement. Before arranging alternate site for slum dwellers, it is recommended that no eviction should be undertaken. It is very inhuman to throw people on the street overnight without arranging alternate dwelling site that is the responsibility of the state as per the constitution.

Implementation of National Housing Policy. In the National Housing Policy 2008, it was decided to allot 5 acre land in Mirpur area for construction of low cost housing, but that has not yet been implemented.

Urban Bank for the Poor. A specialised bank like Krishi Bank or Prabashi Kallyan bank may be established in which urban poor will be allowed to open bank account with very nominal charges and they may be included in the micro loan project like the farmers take loan from krishi Bank without any collateral.

Only One Organization is to be Made Responsible. Only one organization like DCC or RAJUK may be made responsible to look into the affair of slum management. This will facilitate management and administration easier.

Social Business¹¹ In a social business, the company must cover all costs and make profit, but at same time achieve the social objective, such as, healthcare for the poor, housing for the poor, financial services for the poor, nutrition for malnourished children, providing safe drinking water, etc in a business way. No personal gain is desired by the investors.

Affluent sector of the society may come forward in realising the idea of Dr Yunus in establishing the social business aiming the poor people.

Providing Vocational Training to Slum Dwellers. Slum dwellers constitute almost 30% of the total urban area population. Govt may consider providing vocational training to able personnel among slum people that will make them human resource instead of being burden of the society.

11. <http://www.muhammadyunus.org/Social-Business/social-business>.

Birth Registration. It is learnt that at times poor people are subjected to force bribing during the birth registration. As a result they lose interest in this process. Awareness programme may be launched for birth registration of the slum children.

Stipend for Children. In some cases children are forced to go to work. Poor children may be brought under the stipend programme as employment substitution. This may help bring back drop out children to the school.

Micro Financing for Employment Generation. Urban sustainability requires the inclusion of poor into the mainstream economic and social life of the city. Micro financing on various projects like poultry, sewing, hens farming, may be done in order to create more employment facilities.

Awareness about HIV, Malaria and other Contagious Diseases. Although slum people are more aware in respect of health and hygiene than before but they seem to be less aware about HIV and other contagious disease. Necessary programme in this respect may be run to create more awareness.

Prevention of Early Marriage. Early marriage is still prevalent in the society. More campaign may be launched in this respect in order to get rid of it.

Contribution to Zakat Fund. Govt may sensitise people more to contribute to zakat fund that can be utilised for poverty alleviation programmes.

Formation of Appropriate Pro-Poor Macro-economic Policies and Tools. A comprehensive and integrated approach should be taken to alleviate poverty and sustainable development for urban areas. It should also link urban planning and development with MDGs and poverty strategies.

Community Health Care. Mosque based Community Health care may be developed. As the density of mosque is comparatively more, this may help in poor without development of further establishment.

Cheap Transportation. Mass transportation may be developed aiming the poor and common people. This is basically a need of the time.

Improvement of Sanitation Facilities. Community toilet/public toilet near the slum area with shower facilities may be developed with minimum pay system.

Land Zoning. Land scarcity is one of the serious problems in Bangladesh due to overpopulation. Land may be earmarked for specific uses so that unplanned housing does not take place either both at rural or urban areas. This will prevent further slum growth as well.

Rural Development Programme. Efforts may be undertaken to create more jobs in rural areas through rural development programme to reduce the pull factor of rural people towards cities.

Control of Law and Order Situation. Efforts may continue to keep law and order situation under control. In this regard, additional community policing aiming the slum people may be thought of.

CONCLUSION

Urban transformation of Dhaka City has created severe pressure on existing infrastructures and its absorbing capacities. A significant portion of poor residents are forced to live in a variety of slums in the city which are mostly vulnerable to flooding, unhealthy environments and diseases, and generally unsuitable for habitation. Although the phenomenon of the slum is as old as the city itself, nearly all the slums have developed in recent decades as a consequence of rapid mass urbanization.

The causes of urban poverty remains as migration of people from rural areas, low income, illiteracy and failure to have savings. This research found that the majority migration took place from Barisal and Rangpur district. Therefore, it is evident that the economic activity in those two districts are not enough to provide sufficient employment and consequently they migrate to cities.

Few concerns of urban poverty are; 70% slum people are still illiterate, child labour is still predominant (70%), and very high house rent (about Tk. 15 per sq. ft) that is very disproportionate to availability of amenities. By some indicators although it was found that their awareness over health and hygiene has improved but at the same time it can be seen that there are unsatisfactory levels of awareness in some important issues in the field like washing hands before daily activities.

Poverty in Dhaka City is clearly seen in patterns of income, consumption and household assets. In the sample study group it is found that the overall earnings have improved but they spend the majority of their earnings on food and house rent. As a result, essential non food items like health and education are often neglected. The urban poor usually buy food items at a low cost and generally avoid costly items. Furthermore, the urban poor lacks access to formal sources of credit and other resources and are consequently usually forced to seek credit from informal sources. The whole picture of deprivation presses the slum dwellers to increase their earnings and to save and secure their livelihoods by any means. Some vested quarters take the advantages of this situation and motivate the poor to unethical works. In this circumstances, due to lack of education and

awareness and sometimes their greed drive them to the world of crime. Again as the slum areas are very congested and not counted as formal housing area to the government, perpetrators are using these slums as their hideout and centre of their all activity. Thus urban poverty and urban slums pose various problems to social life of Dhaka in many ways. Until Sixth Five Year plan, there has not been much emphasis on urban poverty.

Although slum dwellers are the sources of informal workforce in the cities, but they pose innumerable problems to the urban life as well. It is not easy to combat urban poverty overnight. There is scarcity of resources and there are more priority sectors. However, the important challenges that remain as impediments to this effect are creation of employment, controlling criminal and anti social activities, providing housing for all, access to education and healthcare etc.

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