

Inception and Orientation Workshop on Child Labour and Trade License Regulatory Mechanism

**Remarks by
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Deputy Director, ILO Country Office for Bangladesh
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Good Morning.

Mr. Abul Kalam Azad, Chief Executive Officer, Dhaka City Corporation,

Mr. Moniruzzaman, Chief Revenue Officer, DCC

Mr. Anwar Hossain Patwary, Chief Coordinator and Chief Slum Development Officer, DCC
Colleagues, Ladies and Gentlemen,

On behalf of the ILO Country Office for Bangladesh, it is my great pleasure to participate in this important Inception and Orientation Workshop on “Child Labour and Trade License Regulatory Mechanism”. I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate Dhaka City Corporation (DCC), especially Honorable Chief Executive Officer, for taking bold step in introducing the new “Office Order”, which aims at achieving the goal of prevention and elimination of child labour by incorporating a pre-conditional clause into its existing trade licensing procedure.

Let me at the start emphasize that child labour is a real problem in Bangladesh in general and in Dhaka in particular. It is estimated that more than 100,000, or 32% of urban working children is in Dhaka and 45% of them are working in hazardous work, which is harmful to their health, safety and moral, and without having chance to education which will have significant consequences on individual as well as country development.

It is therefore under the National Time Bound Program framework, DCC-as the local elected body-was selected as the first City Corporation in Bangladesh to execute child labour program in the urban informal sectors through the ILO-executed program financed by the Government of the Netherlands. In addition to direct service delivery to working children and their guardians through its partner NGOs, DCC is playing important role in the development of child labour regulatory and monitoring mechanisms, and today's Orientation Workshop for staff of the Revenue Department at central and zonal level is another important achievement for DCC in addition to its Community-based Workplace Surveillance Group, which was launched in November last year.

Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Child labour, in particular its hazardous and worst forms, cannot be tolerated but we must act without further delays as it is the responsibility of all of us to prevent and remove children from hazardous and worst forms of work. Until and unless License Officers or Tax Officials monitor the workplaces, educate employers, and firmly enforce the new “Office Order” against those unlawful employers, it is not possible for Bangladesh to address child labour in a sustainable and successful manner. It is therefore that today's event is organized in a way that all staff will be sensitized on the issues of child labour, relevant legal instruments and policies and equipped with additional information on the new Child Labour and Trade License Regulatory Mechanism.

I would like to take this special occasion to inform you that ILO as a UN's lead agency to combat child labour is pleased to be able to work with the Government of Bangladesh, especially DCC and Ministry of Labour and Employment (MOLE) and other social partners, including NGOs and other civil society organizations through its Urban Informal Economy Project. Based on good lessons learned, models and Child Labour Monitoring and Regulatory Mechanisms developed and are being piloting in the existing four (4) Zones; we have decided to expand our intervention in the remaining 6 (six) Zones of Dhaka City in 2011. Through lessons learned, models and mechanisms developed and achievements made, it is time for DCC to mainstream child labour program into its regular programme and budget through development and implementation the sustainability plan.

Before I conclude my remarks, let me reiterate that ILO is very pleased to have the opportunity to closely work with and to provide technical assistance to DCC to implement an action program that aims to reduce hazardous child labour in Dhaka City.

Last but not least, I would like to express my sincere thanks to all of you for your participating. We look forward to affective and sustainable functioning of the newly adopted "Office Order" on Child Labour and Trade License Regulatory Mechanism, and we believe that DCC Management, especially Honorable CEO, will continue to sustain his strong dedication, commitment, and guidance in addressing hazardous and worst forms of child labour in Dhaka.

Thank you.